



#Make A Difference

Make A Difference Curriculum provided by Lifethought International

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#MakeADifference Learning Activities

Instructions for Teachers

The following activities have been designed to help young people learn about the importance of community belonging, understand that they can be an influence for good, and feel motivated to help someone in need. The activities are designed to be adapted across age levels. Teachers can expand the activities to include optional writing or sharing activities. The #MakeADifference posters can be hung in a classroom or around the school to remind students to help someone in their community.

Big Ideas

- I am an important part of my community.
- Helping others in my community can be done through small acts of service.
- I am capable of making a change in my community.



Service Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. explain the role that they play in their community.
2. explain what it means to offer service and be kind.
3. identify small ways that others help their community.
4. create and implement an action plan for a small community service act and share what they did with others.

Sharing Materials

While working on these activities in your class, you are encouraged to share pictures and videos of your students on your school or class social media platforms. Use the hashtag #makeadifference to share your experiences with classrooms around the world engaging in local community service!

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Activity 1: My Community



Objectives

Service Learning Objective

Students will be able to explain what a community is and who is in their community.

English Language Objectives

-Novice-Low/Novice-Mid: Students will be able to use key vocabulary related to the lesson in order to describe their communities.

-Novice-High/Intermediate-Low: Students will be able to describe the communities that they are a part of using sentence frames.

Vocabulary

Suggested Key Vocabulary

- Community
- Neighborhood
- City
- Town
- Family
- Friend

Additional Vocabulary

Mother, Father, Brother, Sister, Grandma, Grandpa, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin, Teacher, Neighbor, Classmate

Activity Instructions

Introduction (5 mins)

Human Knot Game

Have students stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder.

Each student extends their right hand and grabs the hand of someone across from them. Then, they extend their left hand and grab the hand of a different person across from them. Without letting go, the group must work together to untangle themselves and form a circle again.

Class Discussion (5 mins)

Discuss the following questions as a class and make a list on the board (if available).

-Where do you live?

Introduce the vocabulary **neighborhood**, **city**, or **town**.

-Who are important people in your life?

Allow students to make a list. This might include some of the vocabulary from the suggested additional vocabulary list. Explain that a **community** is a group of people who live in the same place or have something in common. Give examples such as the **class**, their **neighborhood**, their **families**, their **cities**, etc.

Ask students: *Who was the most important person in the human knot?* (everyone was important). Explain that, just like in the human knot game, everyone depends on one another in a **community**.

Closure (5 minutes)

1. Invite students to draw a picture of a community that they are a part of and some important people in that community.
2. Ask students to use a sentence frame like the one below to share their picture with a classmate:

My community is _____.

The people in this community are _____.

Activity 2: Kindness



Objectives

Service Learning Objective

Students will be able to explain what it means to offer service and be kind.

English Language Objectives

-Novice-Low/Novice-Mid: *Students will be able to use key vocabulary to draw a picture of an act of kindness that they have seen in their community.*

-Novice-High/Intermediate-Low: *Students will be able to use key vocabulary related to the lesson in order to give a compliment to a classmate.*

Vocabulary

Suggested Key Vocabulary

- Kindness
- Help
- Share
- Smile
- Hug
- Give
- Listen
- Service
- Compliment

Additional Vocabulary

Nice, Friendly, Funny, Smart, Brave, Creative, Hardworking, Cheerful, Patient, Caring

Activity Instructions

Introduction (5 mins)

"Yes, please!" "No, thank you." Game:

The teacher reads the sentences provided below one by one. If the students think they would like the situation in the sentence, then they stand up. If they think they would not like it, then they sit down.

Sentences:

- A friend smiles at you.
- Someone gives you a gift.
- Your friend takes your pencil.
- A family member gives you a hug.
- Someone yells at you.
- A friend gives you a compliment.
- Your friend listens to you when you speak.
- Your friend says mean things to you.
- Someone shares their food with you.

Class Discussion (5 mins)

1. Ask students the following questions:

- How do you feel when someone smiles at you?*
- How do you feel when a friend listens to you speak?*
- How do you feel when your friend says mean things to you?*

2. Explain that when we are kind, we do things to help others feel happy. Also, explain that our communities become stronger when we are kind to one another and offer service to one another. Refer to the human knot game in Lesson 1 and explain that each person's actions impact the other person's.

3. Introduce the suggested key vocabulary. Use classroom pictures, drawings, or actions to give context. Help students create example sentences for each word.

Closure (5 minutes)

-Option #1: Instruct students to draw a picture of an act of kindness that they have seen in their community.

-Option #2:

- Line the students in two lines facing one another so that each student has a partner. Write the sentence frames below. Invite students to use the sentence frames to give a compliment to one another using words from the suggested additional vocabulary list or others as needed. Model this for students.
- After 30 seconds, instruct one of the rows to move to the left so that each student has a new partner. Repeat the activity several times so that students are able to practice giving compliments several times.
 - You are very ____ because you ____.
 - I like how you are very ____.
 - Thank you for being so ____.

Activity 3: Gratitude



Objectives

Service Learning Objective

Students will be able to identify small ways that others help their community.

English Language Objectives

-Novice-Low/Novice-Mid: *Students will be able to use key vocabulary related to the lesson in order to express gratitude for a community helper.*

-Novice-High/Intermediate-Low: *Students will be able to write letters to express gratitude to community helpers using prompts and sentence frames.*

Vocabulary

Suggested Key Vocabulary

- Doctor
- Nurse
- Police
- Firefighter
- Bus Driver
- Paramedic
- Librarian
- Postal Worker
- Garbage Collector

Additional Vocabulary

Grateful, Thank you, Appreciation, Express, Take care of

Activity Instructions

Introduction (5 mins)

1. Tell the students that today, they are going to make a list of people who make the community a better place. Give a culturally appropriate example, such as "doctor." Then, ask the students to share some of their own ideas and write them on the board.
2. Charades Game:
3. Divide the students into small groups of 4-5 students.
4. Tell them that they will each have an opportunity to be the "actor."
5. When the student is the "actor", they will pretend to be one of the community helpers listed on the board. The other students must try to guess which word they are acting out.
6. Once the word is guessed, a different student becomes the "actor" and must act out a different word.
7. Give the groups 3 minutes. Tell the students that the group that guesses the most words wins.

Class Discussion (5 mins)

1. Discuss the following questions as a class:
 - a. How does the ____ (insert community helper title) make our community a better place?
 - b. How do the actions of ____ (insert community helper title) impact your life?
 - c. What would it be like if we didn't have ____ (insert community helper title) in our community?
2. Explain that when we recognize the kind acts of others in our communities, we are showing them gratitude for their work. Gratitude is an attitude or feeling of appreciation and we can show it by thanking others.
3. Explain that when we thank others, we also make our community a better place because it makes others happy. Just like the human knot in Activity 1, we are all connected.

Closure (5 minutes)

Option #1: Invite students to express gratitude for a community helper using the sentence frame below. Go around the circle and give each student the opportunity to say something.

I am grateful for the ____ in my community.

Option #2:

1. Invite students to write thank you letters for a community helper in their community. Model and provide the sentences like the ones below as support for their writing.
2. Demonstrate how to structure a letter in a culturally appropriate way in the students' community.

Sample sentences:

I want to thank you for your work in our community.

Activity 4: Small Actions Have Big Results

Objectives

Service Learning Objective

Students will be able to identify small ways that others help their community.

Students will be able to create and implement an action plan for a small community service act.

English Language Objectives

-Novice-Low/Novice-Mid: *Students will be able to use key vocabulary related to the lesson in order to create a list of ways they can help their communities.*

-Novice-High/Intermediate-Low: *Students will be able to describe ways they can help their communities using sentence frames.*

Vocabulary

Suggested Key Vocabulary

- Give a compliment
- Write a letter
- Help with chores
- Hold the door
- Pick up litter
- Give a hug
- Include others
- Say thank you
- Share a meal
- Make a new friend

Additional Vocabulary

Drop, Ripple, Effect

Activity Instructions Continued

Class Discussion Option #2

Where access to technology is not possible, share The StarFish Story adapted from "The Star Thrower" by Loren Eiseley

One day, a young man was walking along the shore. As he was walking, he saw an old man. The old man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean. He came closer and called out, "Good morning! What are you doing?"

The old man paused, looked up, and replied, "I am throwing starfish into the ocean."

"Why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the young man.

The old man replied, "If I don't throw them in, they'll die."

"But, don't you realize that there are thousands of starfish on the beach? You can't possibly make a difference!" said the young man. The old man bent down, picked up another starfish, and threw it into the ocean. He then said, "It made a difference for that one."

- Ask the students what they think the meaning of the story is. Help them understand that small actions can make a big difference in people's lives.

Activity Instructions

Introduction (5 mins)

Option #1: If the materials are available, bring a large bowl of water to class. Gather students around the bowl and drop a rock in the center in order to make a ripple. Ask students to explain what happened to the water when the rock dropped in the middle of the bowl. You may choose to introduce the suggested additional vocabulary here.

Explain how this demonstrates how small actions can have big results.

Option #2: Where materials for Option #1 are not available, use one of the following examples as relevant and culturally appropriate to the context. Explain how this demonstrates how small actions can have big results.

1. A small seed turns into a flower.
2. A flame can turn into a fire.
3. A door opens on small hinges.
4. A stitch in fabric holds it together.
5. A grain of sand plays a part in making an entire beach.

Class Discussion (5 mins)

Option #1

1. Where access to technology is possible, watch the following video as a class:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaWA2GbcnJU>.

As students watch, have them list ways that the man helps others. Examples may include watering a plant, pushing a cart for a lady, feeding a dog, giving money to someone, sharing food, giving up his seat on the bus, making someone laugh, and smiling.

2. Ask the students how this man's small actions may have impacted the lives of the people he helped. Help them understand that small actions can make a big difference in people's lives, just like the rock in the water had a large impact.
3. Finally, ask students to describe how they think the man felt when he was helping people. Make a list of "feelings" words that students use on the board and add new words as needed.

Closure (5 minutes)

Option #1: As a class, create a list of small actions that the students can take to help their communities. Students may suggest their own ideas, or you can use the suggested vocabulary list to help them. Have the students choose one action to take in the next couple of days. Ask them to tell a partner what they plan to do using a sentence frame such as: I will help someone in my community by _____. Tell the students that in the next class, they will share what act of kindness they did with one another.

Option #2: Plan a small project that students can do together as a class to show gratitude for someone in their school or local community or to help someone in need. Encourage other classes in your school to participate in your class project or create their own.

Activity 5: How Did We Help Our Community?

Vocabulary*

*Vocabulary for this lesson should be chosen by the teacher--use the students' list of acts of kindness as a guide.



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o	What
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Note for Teachers

Use the end of this unit as an opportunity to celebrate your student's learning. Hold a celebration of all the acts of kindness and service your students have done while working on these activities. For example, your students can share their successes with another class at your school. Younger students could draw pictures of their service and hang them in your classroom or on the walls of your school. Other options include a class party or other type of celebration appropriate for your school. Templates for students are included at the end of the curriculum.

Objectives

Service Learning Objective

Students will share something they did to serve their community with others.

English Language Objectives

-Novice-Low/Novice-Mid: *Students will draw a picture of their act of kindness and use simple words and lists of words to explain what they did.*

Novice-High/Intermediate-Low: *Students will explain their act of kindness to a partner using sentence frames.*

Activity Instructions

Introduction (5 mins)

Give the students time to draw a picture of their act of kindness. If someone did not complete the assignment, have them draw something they will do in the future.

Class Discussion (5 mins)

Put students in pairs or small groups. Have them explain to one another the acts of kindness they did since the last class period using a sentence frame like those below.

You may need to review "feelings" vocabulary such as: happy, pleased, blessed, kind, etc.

I helped someone by _____.
When I was helping I felt _____ because _____.

Once students have shared with their partners or groups, ask if anyone would like to share what they did with the class. Allow several students to share their acts of kindness.

Optional: Ask students to draw a picture of their act of kindness and write words or sentences that describe how they helped someone. Display the pictures in the classroom and remind students to keep showing acts of kindness or service to those around them.

Closure (5 minutes)

Read the following quote: "No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted" (Aesop).

Ask the students what they think this quote means and to reflect on what they have learned about small acts of kindness. Allow them to share with a partner or to write it down in a notebook.

My Service Project

My Service Project

