

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notes About My Story (Pre-write)**

Title of Story: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Characters: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Setting(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What happens at the beginning about kindness? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What happens in the middle about kindness? \_\_\_\_\_




\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What happens at the end about kindness? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Self Evaluation: My story About Being Kind**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

			
My story has a title.			
My story has a beginning.			
My story has a middle.			
My story has an end.			
My story is about being kind.			

One thing I like about how my story is about being kind: \_\_\_\_\_

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Something I will work on when writing a story next time is: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Checklist for Self-Evaluation**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>True</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>False</b>
Student's story has a title.			
Student's story has a beginning.			
Student's story has a middle.			
Student's story has an end.			
Students' story is about being kind.			

Depending on what type of story the child has decided to write, I will adapt the *Classroom Based Assessment* rubric for fiction and nonfiction stories on pages 241 and 242 to assess the stories.

## **Introducing the Theme**

During the first lesson of the unit, I will remind students that our school's Virtue of the Month is about Kindness and Caring. I will let students think about a time when they were kind to someone or when someone was kind to them, and let them share. This will help set the tone and also help students to realize that everyone has experienced kindness to some degree throughout their lives. I will explain to them that we will be spending several weeks on this topic and that our topic's name is "Striving to Be Kind to Others." We will have a discussion on what striving means and why we would strive to be kind.

I will explain the four concepts on our mind map that I will have them fill out individually as a pre-assessment instrument. The four concepts are what does being kind mean, who can you be kind to, how do you feel when someone is kind to you, and examples of being kind. Students will be given around 20 minutes to fill this mind map out and we will share them to debrief.

## **Concept Development**

As a post-assessment, students will continue filling out their pre-assessment mind map in a different color. This way, students will see how much more they have learned after the unit. The students' individual concept maps are directly tied into concept development because the map includes all of the generalizations that are in my unit plan. I believe that concept development is occurring all throughout the unit, especially during class meeting days on Fridays. On these days, we will be discussing the virtue and how it explicitly relates to the four key concepts. Students will have developed their own concept development mind map as a result of their learnings during the unit. To emphasize the concepts, students will use their mind map as a guide sheet to write a letter to someone special on what it means to be kind and what it takes to show kindness, which are the central questions for the unit.

## **Artistic Response**

As an artistic response to the literature students are reading, I have decided to have students create a piece of a Kindness quilt that will show how the characters in the book they were reading showed kindness to each other. Students can also make another piece about how they were kind to someone or how someone was kind to them in real life. This activity is taken off of Katherine Schlick Noe's Literature Circles Resource Center website (<http://www.litcircles.org>). Once each student has finished their piece of the quilt, we will mount them on butcher paper and hang it outside in the common hallway. That way, it will show a variety of ways books show us how to be kind and we that sharing our knowledge with the other students in our unit is an act of kindness.

## **Positive Impact on Student Learning**

I know that students have a general sense of what it means to be kind to others, but this comprehensive and meaningful exploration through literature, writing and working with the community will have a substantial positive impact on students'

learning. It will help them to apply their learning to real life and understand the benefits of striving to be kind. Students will also learn to literature how characters are kind to others and can apply that to their daily situations. All through their lives they will be interacting and dealing with people whether they like them as people or not and this unit will instill in them the importance of kindness and how it enhances the quality of life and community.

### **Communications with Families/Students**

Attached to the unit is a copy of the website for this unit. The copy is what I will give to all students regardless if they have Internet access at home or not. This way, students will not be isolated if they do not have Internet access. The only thing that will be on the website that families may not have access to without Internet are the links and pictures of learning. With request, I can send home hard copies of those with the students.

### **Community Resources/Collaboration**

Throughout the unit, students will be interacting with members from the community to help enhance students' learning and diverse perspectives. Parent volunteers will be in the classroom during reading time where they will help facilitate literature circles and be a support to the students when they need extra help. This is a wonderful time for students to interact with adults and to have more hands to help during reading time. In addition, students will be collaborating with a community contact for our service learning project. They will be directly helping the community by creating care packages for the homeless community. Students will also have direct communication with a homeless shelter employee or representative during the project and understand their role in the community. This portion of our unit will allow students to gain hands on experience with what we are learning about striving to be kind.

### **Classroom Community**

The unit on striving to be kind will directly impact the students' classroom community. We have already established as a classroom that our room is its own community and we need to respect each others' differences within the classroom. Through learning more about kindness, students will be able to show kindness to each other creating a more warm and respectful climate in the classroom. It will create a democratic feeling in the room because students will learn to work together and support each other as they are working towards the same goal- to learn new things and work together. Learning about kindness will show students many examples of working as a collaborative group and building each other up with kind words and gestures.

Students will have many opportunities for self-directed learning throughout the unit. They will participate in literature circles, independent work, and whole group learning. Through reading different types of literature, students will gain different perspectives and discussion will be centered and based on the literature we study. Every day will be different, which will immensely help in keeping the

students engaged. I believe that making everyday look different will help with classroom management because it won't feel routine. If there is a problem with classroom management, we will go over the classroom rules together as a class and make sure students remember them throughout reading time.

### **Unit Overview/Critique**

The unit on Striving to Be Kind to Others will teach students an imperative virtue to have as member living in any kind of community. This is a characteristic that will be helpful to them as they are students in a classroom, members in a family, a friend to somebody, etc. The strength of this unit is that it is teaching a characteristic that is admirable and necessary to have while living in a democratic and pluralistic society. In addition, they will be learning about this virtue through different types of literature and actively showing kindness to others. Students will also participate in different ways of learning which will allow more meaningful and engaged learning. The way that this unit is set up will stick with the students while growing up because of the active way we are learning to be kind to others. The unit is also interweaved through our social studies unit on communities, which will help emphasize and connect students' learning.

One weakness about this unit is inability to go more in depth with other types of literature. Due to the age group and their developmental abilities, there is a restriction to the types of literature we can read and the activities we are able to participate in.

### **Service Learning**

My service learning project will be creating care packages for the homeless community in our area. The service learning project is directly linked to our social studies unit, however, is also directly connected to the themed literature unit. It will allow students to show kindness to members of our community whom they usually might not and also show that a little kindness goes a long way. I have already had a meeting with Dr. Anderson and he is in full support of my project.

### **Thematic Books**

Conari Press. (Ed.) (1994) Kids' Random Acts of Kindness Berkeley, CA: Conari Press.

*This book is filled with ways to show kindness to others. It is a great resource to show that small and big gestures of kindness are appreciated, and that everyone enjoys it when someone is kind to them.*

Henkes, K. (1988) Chester's Way. Hong Kong, China: South China Printing Company.

*Chester and Wilson always do everything a certain way and things get shaken up when Lilly moves into the neighborhood. They realize that even though they think they are different, Lilly turns out to be a good mouse after all. This book shows that it's kind to give people a chance even when you don't know them.*

Pearson, E. & Kosaka, F. (2002) Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deeds. Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith

*Mary is a little girl who shows kindness to others in her community. This book shows that even though you may be young, you can still make a great impact on the community and those who live in it.*

Polacco, P. (1998) Thank You, Mr. Falker. New York, NY: Philomel Books.

*Trisha is struggling to read and the name calling from her classmates not encouraging her to keep learning. A new teacher, Mr. Falker comes and helps her to see that she is able to read. This book will help students realize the disservice they are doing to someone when they are not kind to another, and how being kind encourages someone to keep trying.*

Reasoner, C. (1994) The Magic Amber. US: Troll Associates.

*A couple sacrifices what little they have to feed a stranger even though they are struggling to feed themselves. The stranger leaves a magic amber rock, which blesses them with abundance. This book teaches that humility and sharing are ways of showing kindness.*

Rosenberry, V. (1998) When Vera Was Sick. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Co.

*Vera becomes sick with the chicken pox, which requires her to stay home while others are playing. Her mom and dad are kind to her by cooking her soup and bringing home flowers to cheer her up. This book shows how family members show kindness to each other when they are in need.*

Williams, V. (1984) A Chair For my Mother. China: HarperCollins.

*When a family's house burns down in a fire, the daughter, mother and grandmother save up all their spare coins to buy a new chair for their apartment. This shows that amidst large situations that may seem like there is no solution, working together shows kindness and can help find peace and love through each other.*

## **Resource List**

Hill, B.C., Ruptic, C. & Norwick, L. (1998) Classroom Based Assessment.

Norwood, Massachusetts: Christopher-Gorden Publishers, Inc.

*Classroom Based Assessments gave me the resources on how to assess nonfiction and fiction stories.*

Routman, R. (2003) Reading Essentials. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

*This was a great resource when creating lessons to be meaningful. It was especially useful when working on the Making Connections lesson and other comprehension skills.*

Routman, R. (2005) Writing Essentials. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

*This textbook was helpful when creating the non-fiction and fiction story writing piece of the unit. It showed me appropriate developmental lessons and how to stagger writing.*

Schlick Noe, K. (2006) *Literature Circles Resource Center*. Retrieved October 30, 2007, from [www.litcircles.org](http://www.litcircles.org).

*The Literature Circles Resource Center gave me information on creating Literature Circles as well as artistic responses and expansion projects to emphasize learning. It also helped me on how to schedule literature circles.*