

Random Acts of Kindness:

Desk Notes

This is the final lesson in our Courage unit. It focuses on the namesake of the entire organization: Random Acts of Kindness. The class will write sticky notes of encouragement and randomly stick them to another student's desk (they could use lockers, too, if students have those) for that student to discover later. Teachers, consider pre-assigning students to specific grades or quadrants or desk rows in classrooms to ensure everyone in the targeted group gets a note. You might also assemble a “sweeper” team of your naturally more empathetic, helpful students who can ensure everyone is included.

Kindness Concept(s)

Courage, Kindness, Random

Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes.

Required Materials

- Sticky notes (enough for each student to have 5 or 6 notes)
- Pens, pencils, art supplies for writing messages on sticky notes.

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.



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AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.

See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Complete a random act of kindness.
- Explain how it takes courage to be kind to others without recognition.

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

- Help emerging writers write their notes so the message is clear to the recipient.
- Consider using the more empathetic, kind, helpful students as “sweepers” to ensure everyone in the targeted group gets a note of encouragement and kindness.



Share

5-7 minutes

*Has anyone here ever gotten a really good surprise?
What was it and how did it make you feel?*

Invite student responses.

I heard some really good surprises and some fun feelings as a result! When someone does something nice for you that you weren't expecting, it makes you feel loved and appreciated and warm inside. And you know what, the person who did that kind thing for you feels those things, too!



Inspire

5-7 minutes

*Today we are going to be RAKtivists - or Random Acts of Kindness activists!
We are going to do something small that will make someone else's day a little brighter!*

What are Random Acts of Kindness?

Explain that a random act of kindness is a fun surprise of kindness given to someone else without them ever knowing it was you! These acts of kindness are not announced, not 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. The trick to completing random acts of kindness is to not get caught.



Empower

15 minutes

Today we are going to write a quick message of kindness to another student on a sticky note and you are going to secretly put it on his or her desk while that class is out of the classroom.

On the whiteboard (or smart board), I have some easy phrases that you can put on your sticky note, along with a nice picture if you want:

Our school is better because you are here!
You have a great smile!
Hope you are having a good day!
Make today as great as you are!
Thank you for being you!

If you have another idea for a phrase, please let me know what it is and I can help you.

You won't know who's desk you are putting the note on, so don't worry about adding anyone's name. You are just going to quickly, but securely, make sure the note sticks and then keep moving!

As a teacher, you will need to communicate this plan with the other classroom teacher of the class you are going to encourage. Make sure he/she knows you are coming in (possibly to ensure the door remains unlocked and to communicate the best time to come in when the other students are out).



Reflect

5-7 minutes

Spend a little time afterward asking students about how they felt putting the note on the desks. Talk about other RAKs they can do, either at school or at home. There are many lists online to help jumpstart ideas; the RAK Foundation has a good list of 10 (including the sticky note idea) to get the conversation rolling:

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/the-kindness-blog/2933-10-kindness-week-ideas-for-schools>



Extension Ideas

- Random Acts of Kindness can and should be carried out beyond the classroom. As a class, create a T-chart and label the sections home and park. Brainstorm ideas for doing random acts of kindness in both locations. Encourage students to complete one random act of kindness daily throughout the summer.
- Create (or have students create) a “RAKtivist” chart they can hang on their fridge at home or in their bedrooms. Have them track their RAKs and set goals (maybe 5 RAKs a week or 10 per month, etc.). Work with the third grade intake teacher to use the charts to kick-off the week back to school next fall.



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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/>

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