

Small Acts Every Day

A Lesson Plan

Grades: K - 3

Subjects: Language, Social Studies, Health & Physical Education

Duration: 60 - 75 mins.
(can be split into 2 lessons)

Big Ideas:

Our identities are complex, each person is unique and experiences life differently.

Despite our differences, we share similarities such as gratitude and challenges.

All people are worthy of respect, acceptance and support, regardless of their identities, perspectives, and experiences.

We can contribute to making spaces/our communities safer and more accepting through our words and actions.

Key Terms:

kindness
respect
acceptance
support
gratitude
challenge
inclusion
Identity
differences
bullying
discrimination
community
uniqueness

Learning Goals:

We are learning to identify, describe and celebrate our differences and similarities.

We are learning the importance of uniqueness, kindness, respect, and empathy.

We are learning to support ourselves and others as members of a community.

Success Criteria:

I can name at least one thing I am grateful for and one thing I am challenged by.

I can name 2- 3 of my identities.

I can name 1 -2 actions that are kind, respectful, and caring to myself.

I can name 2 - 3 actions that are kind, respectful, and caring to others.

I can name 2-3 people/places to ask for support.

Prior Knowledge:

A basic understanding of respect, kindness, identity, diversity, inclusion, gratitude, and discrimination.

Strands/Expectations:

Kindergarten

- communicate with others in a variety of ways, for a variety of purposes, and in a variety of contexts
- demonstrate an understanding of the diversity among individuals and families and within schools and the wider community
- demonstrate an awareness of their own health and well-being
- demonstrate literacy behaviours that enable beginning readers to make sense of a variety of texts
- demonstrate literacy behaviours that enable beginning writers to communicate with others
- demonstrate an understanding and critical awareness of a variety of written materials that are read by and with their educators
- demonstrate a sense of identity and a positive self-image
- develop an appreciation of the multiple perspectives encountered within groups, and of ways in which they themselves can contribute to groups and to group well-being
- recognize bias in ideas and develop the self-confidence to stand up for themselves and others against prejudice and discrimination

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Strands/Expectations (cont.):

LANGUAGE

Grades 1,2,3

Oral Communication

- listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes;
- use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes;
- reflect on and identify their strengths as listeners and speakers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in oral communication situations

Writing

- generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience;

SOCIAL STUDIES

Gr.1

Strand A. Heritage and Identity: Our Changing Roles and Responsibilities

- A1. describe some of the ways in which people's roles, relationships, and responsibilities relate to who they are and what their situation is, and how and why changes in circumstances might affect people's roles, relationships, and responsibilities as well as their sense of self
- A2. use the social studies inquiry process to investigate some aspects of the interrelationship between their identity/sense of self, their different roles, relationships, and responsibilities, and various situations in their daily lives
- A3. demonstrate an understanding that they and other people have different roles, relationships, and responsibilities, and that all people should be treated with respect, regardless of their roles, relationships, and responsibilities

Gr.2

Strand A. Heritage and Identity: Changing Family and Community Traditions

- A1. compare some significant traditions and celebrations among diverse groups and at different times, and identify some of the reasons for changes in these traditions/ celebrations
 - A1.2 compare their family's structure and some of their traditions and celebrations with those of their peers' families (e.g., traditions/celebrations related to rites of passage, holidays, foods)
- A3. describe some of the major groups in their community, including different types of families, and some of the ways in which traditions and heritage are passed on by such groups
 - A3.1 identify and describe different types of families (e.g., families with one parent, two parents, no children; same-sex families; blended and multigenerational families; immigrant families; families where the parents come from different religious or ethnocultural groups)
 - A3.2 identify some different groups in their community (e.g., various religious and ethnocultural groups), and describe some of the ways in which they contribute to diversity in Canada (e.g., different languages, foods, music, clothing, holidays; ethnic neighbourhoods with specialized shops and restaurants)

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Gr.1

- D2.3 demonstrate the ability to recognize caring behaviours (e.g., listening with respect, being helpful, respecting boundaries) and behaviours that can be harmful to physical and mental health (e.g., ignoring or excluding others; bullying; manipulative behaviours; sexually exploitative or abusive behaviours, including inappropriate touching; verbal, emotional, or physical abuse), and describe the feelings associated with each, as well as appropriate ways of responding, demonstrating an understanding of the importance of consent

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Strands/Expectations (cont.):

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Gr.2

- D2.3 explain the importance of consent and demonstrate the ability to stand up for themselves and others, to enhance well-being and safety (e.g., speaking confidently; stating boundaries, whether in person or online; saying no; respecting the right of a person to say no and encouraging others to respect that right also; reporting exploitative behaviours, such as improper touching of their bodies or others' bodies) [A1.1 Emotions, 1.2 Coping, 1.4 Relationships] Teacher prompt: "Why is standing up for yourself and showing respect for others important in a friendship?"
- D3.1 describe how to relate positively to family members, caregivers, and others (e.g., cooperate, show respect, communicate openly, manage anger, pay attention to what people say and to their facial expressions and body language), and describe behaviours that can be harmful in relating to others (e.g., verbal abuse, including both online and face-to-face name calling, insults, and mocking; deliberately ignoring someone, or ignoring the feelings)

Gr.3

- D1.4 identify the characteristics of healthy relationships (e.g., accepting and respecting differences, avoiding assumptions, being inclusive, communicating openly, establishing and respecting personal boundaries, listening, showing mutual respect and caring, being honest) and describe ways of responding to bullying and other challenges (e.g., exclusion, discrimination, peer pressure, abuse) and of communicating consent in their interactions with others
- D1.5 identify factors (e.g., sleep, food, physical activity, heredity, environment, support from a caring adult, sense of belonging, peer influence) that affect physical development (e.g., of hair, skin, teeth, body size and shape), social-emotional development (e.g., of self-awareness, adaptive skills, social skills), and the development of a healthy body image (e.g., of the ability to enjoy, respect, and celebrate one's body, to acknowledge one's thoughts and feelings about it, to accept its shape and size and to focus instead on what it can do)
- D3.3 describe how visible differences (e.g., skin, hair, and eye colour; facial features; body size and shape; physical aids or different physical abilities; clothing; possessions) and invisible differences (e.g., learning abilities, skills and talents, personal or cultural values and beliefs, mental illness, family background, personal preferences, allergies and sensitivities) make each person unique, and identify ways of showing respect for differences in others

Materials/Resources Needed:

- Small Acts Every Day by Rachael Harrison
- Grateful vs. Challenging templates
- Whiteboard/chart paper
- Small Acts Every Day templates
- Pencil, crayons, markers

*student journals or blank paper can be used instead of templates



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Minds On:

1. Gather in your meeting area; activate students' prior knowledge about identity and diversity by asking "What makes you, you?". Record a few student responses on chart paper/whiteboard.
2. Using the responses, provide your own examples of an "I am..." statement (ex. I am genderqueer and I am athletic.)
3. Have students turn and share two "I am" statements with a peer before doing a quick whip around.
4. Summarize by highlighting the diversity of the class community, (reminding students of "community" if necessary and if available refer to your classroom agreements or pledge).
5. Introduce Small Acts Every Day and tell students they'll be learning more about the importance of our differences and our similarities

10 - 15 minutes

During (we do):

1. Ask students what they think the book will be about. What is a "small act?" What might "small acts every day" mean?
2. Take a few examples and record student predictions/thoughts on the whiteboard.
3. Ask students to listen and look at the illustrations carefully as you read the story, stopping for lots of discussion (suggestions below).
 - o Jessie told her teacher she was feeling like she doesn't fit in. What are some reasons that someone might feel this way? Have you ever felt this way? Why?
 - o What does it mean to be grateful or thankful? What are some examples of challenges or struggles that people might be facing, but that we can't always see on the surface?
4. After reading, ask students, "Why do you think Jessie felt better when the presenters did their activity "Grateful vs. Challenging"?" and follow up with, "What do you think would happen if we did the activity?"
5. Tell students they'll be doing the activity, remind them of the instructions, and provide your own grateful and challenging examples before having them spread out to fill in the G vs. C template.
6. Gather students back together and have them remind each other of the next steps (reading them out loud, listening with kindness, key take aways).
7. Read all the responses out loud, making sure to generalize to avoid singling out individual students.
8. Ask students what they learned from the activity and how they feel now. Is it similar to Jessie? Are their learnings similar to those in the story? Who or what are some people/places that you can ask for help, if you are struggling with a challenge yourself? Record student responses.
9. Summarize by highlighting the key learnings of kindness, uniqueness, and support and revisit and add to the brainstorm about what "small acts every day" means," why they're important and add some examples. Make sure to include examples of supporting ourselves and others.

During (you do):

1. Instruct students that they will be drawing and labelling two pictures:
 - a. at least one example of "Small Acts Every Day for Me"
 - b. at least one example of "Small Acts Every Day for Others"

*see adaptations/differentiation for other options

30 - 40 minutes

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Consolidation:

1. Gather students back together and depending on class size, have all or a few students share their work.
2. Have students help you arrange their work on a classroom display.

10 - 15 minutes

Assessment:

For - Establishing basic prior knowledge of identity, uniqueness, respect, kindness, and support.

As/Of - Student completion of the two drawings demonstrates understanding. Responses to discussion questions before, during, and after the read-aloud and participation in the Grateful vs. Challenging activity demonstrates understanding.

Adaptations/Differentiation:

Early finishers can draw or write about someone who has or does show them kindness through their small acts. They could write them or someone they are thankful for a thank you card.

Students have choice/guidance in the number of examples to include in G vs. C. Drawing a picture with or without labels is an option or the teacher can scribe for students who require it.

The independent activity can be tailored for student needs as well ie. students can write full sentences, multiple sentences, include more than one example, type, etc. There are multiple opportunities and ways to show understanding and participate. Visual aids and additional resources are available.

Extension Activities:

Secret Acts of Kindness

1. Have each student randomly select the name of another student in class. You can use popsicle sticks with names on them or just place all the names in a hat. This will become the secret person to help. Remember: the goal is to help without getting caught! How can you help without being asked or being acknowledged?
2. Allow students a day or week to help their classmates. It may be helpful to write down who each person chose so you can encourage them throughout the week. At the beginning of each day remind students to seek out extra special ways to help their chosen friend. Give ideas based on your schedule.
3. At the end of the day/week, have each person share one way they received anonymous help. In addition, have each person reveal their secret person and at least one way they tried to help them.

Small "Acts" of Kindness

1. Put students in pairs or small groups and instruct them to create a short skit depicting a respectful, kind, and/or caring act.
2. Depending on class size, have a few or all groups share their skits.