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Renewing Ourselves/Renewing Our Teaching
Assignment #10-B, Part I
Lesson Plan, Lesson Sharing, Article

The Kindness Challenge

Relevance/Rationale:

Like many schools, our school has selected several character traits to focus on out of a multitude that our staff values and expects our students to learn, value, and share as well for an empathetic and nurturing community. With that in mind, my class has CREW time in which I share stories that can demonstrate one or more of these traits. The students find examples of the trait in the storyline and we discuss characters' responses, role play, and try to come up with ways to demonstrate the trait at school and at large.

One of my goals is for my class to incorporate some of these lessons into their journaling. I think this also fits in nicely with health standards. I see this as promoting positive self-esteem and emotional health. Studies have shown that helping others has a positive impact. An idea from Mendler's book suggests having students get into the habit of writing down three things that they were successful at, or that they noticed others being successful at, or brainstorming acts of kindness, because studies have shown that "a person's happiness can be increased simply by counting one's own acts of kindness for one week" (pp.43-44). I feel that this is a great way to be mindful of yourself and your actions. Therefore, the following lesson is an adaptation of a previous lesson on demonstrating kindness with the addition of the brainstorm, goal-setting, and journaling.

Lesson Objectives: Students shall set a personal (or team) goal regarding kindness and track his/her/their progress toward its achievement. Students will also identify resources to assist themselves/their group in achieving a personal health goal.

Grades 3-5

- 6.5.1 Set a personal health goal and track progress toward its achievement.
- 6.5.2 Identify resources to assist in achieving a personal health goal.

Language Objective: I will set a goal of doing something that shows kindness and will keep track of it and my progress in my writer's notebook.

Content Objective: Students will set a personal health (emotional/social) goal and identify a resource or resources to achieve it.

Resources/Materials: scraps of paper, dictionaries, Kid President + Glad to Give present How Good Spreads (Teaching kindness to children is part of the fourth National Health Education Standards: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communications skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks. Learning to be kind helps build a positive learning environment. Scientific studies prove that kindness has many physical, emotional, and mental health benefits), TED Talk - Kindness - Orly Wahba [LifeVestInside](#), book [The Hero Club](#) by Ferah Ozbek, some goal-setting sheets/tracking goals examples, computers, [Images for printable pass it on acts of kindness cards](#) (if needed) and the Character Counts cards for Kindness photocopied and cut out (if needed)

Formative Assessment Criteria for Success:

Students will know if they're successful if they achieve their goal. I will know if they're successful from CREW discussions and reading the journal entries regarding the goal process/achievement. I might also know whether their kindness initiatives were successful from feedback from other students, teachers, etc. They might also demonstrate kindness more frequently over time. 4 = I met my goal, tracked it, and helped/showed others resources to help them attain their goal; 3 = I met my goal and tracked my progress in my journal; 2 = I almost met my goal; and 1 = I did not achieve my goal. They will also do the post-survey on kindness.

Activities/Tasks:

First, kids will do a kindness presurvey. Students will watch a Ted Talk on Kindness, as well as a Kid President video first. Following that, we'll discuss key points and ideas generated on kindness in the videos. I will read them the Kindness story from [The Hero Club](#). I'll ask the students to point out examples of kindness in the story/discuss. They'll define kindness. Students will research either in pairs or alone ideas for acts or ideas that demonstrate kindness towards others. We'll generate some ideas for goals and go over the language objective/content objectives. I'll give them the option to do the 3 acts of kindness goal if they're struggling to find or choose an idea. Students will decide if they would like an independent, group, or both kindness goal. They'll write out their goal and the method for tracking it (I'll demonstrate/show several examples). They will have to include the following questions at the end of the kindness challenge.

Bloom's Taxonomy (higher levels)

Analysis: What evidence can you present for meeting your goal, tracking it, and proof of kindness?

Synthesis: How could you improve upon your goal? What new goal ideas do you have? Predict: What might happen if you continued your acts of kindness?

Evaluation: Do you think that kindness matters? Explain.

Procedure: For our CREW meeting, kids will begin by completing a presurvey on kindness. I will assign them to watch two short videos and we will discuss their observations. I will have them write a definition for kindness. I'll read kindness story from The Hero Club and we'll discuss the examples of kindness. They'll research ideas that others have done to show kindness towards others individually or in pairs. We'll reconnect and write down the ideas they've generated. Students will decide what goal(s) they want to accomplish. I'll share and demonstrate the utilization of some goal-tracking ideas. I'll approve (feasible) goals and tracking methods. We'll conclude with predicting what outcomes might be generated.

Modifications/Accommodations: Students may use ideas that have already been done for their goals. They may also choose to work in pairs or table groups and use the same goal with prior approval. I do have a couple of sites mentioned above if some kids are having difficulty generating or finding any ideas.

Extension: Work will continue over a month period. Hopefully, we can take the kindness challenge beyond the walls of our classroom, throughout the building, and then onto the community. Furthermore, we will be reading additional stories and discussing examples. Also, students will role play problems to non-examples of kindness and discuss character counts cards on kindness within teams and as a whole group.