



LESSON

3

What Would You Do Unit Grade 4 • Ages 9-11

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 5 minutes
Instruction: 30 minutes

MATERIALS

Masking tape

One "swamp boards" (sheets of paper or cardboard) per student

RAK Journals

[Kindness Concept Posters](#) for Respect and Responsibility

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.
SL.4.1, 1b

Colorado: Comprehensive Health
S.3, GLE.1, EO.e; Reading, Writing and
Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a

[Learning standards key](#)

Toxic Swamp Crossing

Students will work together with a small group to cross an imaginary swamp.

Key Terms for Students

Consider writing key terms on the board before class to introduce vocabulary and increase understanding.

CONFLICT A strong disagreement or argument between people or groups.

CARING Feeling and showing concern for others.

RESPECT Treating people, places, and things with kindness.

RESPONSIBILITY Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required in your life, home, community and environment.

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Using white boards in their groups to draw a "football-play" style diagram of ways to play the game.
- Helping hand out the swamp boards.
- Referencing the rules throughout the activity; consider displaying them on a document camera.
- Depending on the maturity and skills of the class, the teams could complete the task without talking. This will challenge both the students' non-verbal skills and their ability to work as a team.

Resources

Adapted from activity created by Rich Cardillo, Education Director, National School Climate Center. schoolclimate.org

RAK lessons teach kindness skills through a step-by-step framework of **Inspire, Empower, Act** and **Share**.

However, each lesson starts with the **Share** step to reinforce learning from previous lessons.



The RAK paradigm is the framework for teaching and building kindness skills.



Share (3 mins)

Ask a couple of students who are comfortable sharing to read their letters to Joshua from Spreading Generosity lesson Kindness in Action. If students did not write a letter or are not comfortable sharing, ask them to share how they've shown **generosity** in the community or at home this week.

Inspire

Toxic Swamp Activity (15 mins)

Divide students into teams of 7 to 10. Once all the players are assigned to a team, have the teams stand at one end of the swamp and explain that the goal of the game is to cross the "Toxic Swamp" as a team.

Explain the following rules:

- Each team will be given "Toxic Swamp Boards." Each team should receive a board for each player, minus one. For example, if there are eight people on a team, then they should receive seven boards. These are the only boards a team will get. If they lose any during the game, they don't get any more boards.
- The "Toxic Swamp Boards" keep players safe from the swamp only if a player is touching them with a hand, foot, toe, or finger. If no one is touching the board, the board will dissolve into the swamp (i.e., the teacher will take it).
- If a player steps outside of the swamp boundaries then the entire team must go back to the beginning and start over.
- The entire team must cross the swamp and no one may be left behind. If one person is left behind or stranded, the entire team must go back to the beginning and start over. However, the students can move in groups.

Ask if players have questions. Then give them their swamp boards and allow two minutes to talk together and develop a strategy for crossing the Toxic Swamp.

There is more than one way to cross the swamp. While teams may come up with a new and creative solution, here are some ways it can be done:

- Have a few players cross at a time setting down a certain number of boards (keeping physical contact with each board), stepping across (step-stone fashion), and get "the few" to the other side. One person would then cross back to the other side of the swamp (using the boards as they go) and get a few more teammates. This new group would cross the swamp as the first group did. The team could continue until everyone has crossed the swamp.
- Have the first player in line put a board in front of themselves and stand on it. The team would then pass another board to the first player who would put the new board out in front of themselves (continually maintaining contact with the board) and straddle both boards. The next player in line would put one foot on the second board in the swamp, sharing the space with the first player until the first player takes their foot off the first board and stands on the second board. The first player would continue to take the boards, position them along the crossing (standing and straddling boards along the way) while their teammates mimic their stepping stone movements and the entire team crosses the swamp.
- If there are different teams, all of the teams may decide to share boards and create a straight pathway that stretches the length of the swamp (careful to stand, straddle, or touch the boards). There is nothing in the rules that prevents sharing boards among teams. The teacher may prompt the teams to consider this option by either asking the question, "Is this a race?" or by stating, "The world would be a much better place if people learned to share their materials."



Empower

Discussion (10 mins)

If the activity fails, take enough time to talk about the challenges and issues that arose. Be prepared to give players time to talk through any struggles, especially if there was a conflict during the activity.

After the activity, discuss any of the following questions:

- Was this activity easy or difficult? Why? (Could ask students to rate difficulty on scale of 1-10.)
- Did you get upset with each other or have any conflicts? How did you resolve those conflicts?
- How well did you work as a team?
- Did you show care and respect to each other while you were playing the game?
- Whose responsibility do you think it is to come up with ideas for the game or to work together as a team?

Wrap Up (5 mins)

To gauge understanding of the material, choose from either the evaluation or reflection questions as discussion, writing or journal prompts. Consider providing additional time for deeper evaluation and reflection as needed.

Evaluation Questions

- What are some ways that you can show care and respect to others when you are working in teams?
- What are some challenges to working with a team?
- What do you think is the best way to cross the Toxic Swamp? Why?

Reflection Questions

- Has there been a time in your life where it's been hard to work in a team? Why do you think it was difficult and how did you overcome this?
- Why does it help to be respectful when trying to work as a group?
- What would you do differently next time if you played the Toxic Swamp Crossing game again? Why?

Summary

Often we need to work in groups or with a partner in order to get a task done. It isn't always easy because we all have our own opinions and ways of doing things. There are ways we can be **respectful** and kind to one another even if we disagree. Working together as a team can often be better than working on our own.



Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

You all worked hard today to show kindness to your group members. Each group, put your hands in the middle of the circle and cheer, "Gooooooooo team!" as you lift your hands into the air. You could also ask students to make up their own short team cheer and say it on the count of 3.

Kindness in Action

Directions: Draw your own swamp and make a crossing that has swamp boards with **respectful** words or phrases you can use when working with a group.

