



LESSON 4

Healthy Communications Unit Grade 5 • Ages 10-12

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 5 minutes
Instruction: 30 minutes

MATERIALS

Steps to Forgiveness activity sheet,
one for each student

RAK Journals

[Kindness Concept Posters:](#)
Assertiveness, Compassion

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.
SL.5.1, 2; CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.5.1;
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.4 Colorado:
Comprehensive Health S.3, GLE.1,
EO.c; S.4, GLE.2, EO.a-d; Reading,
Writing and Communicating S.1, GLE.2,
EO.a,b; S.3, GLE.2, EO.c

[Learning standards key](#)

Steps to Forgiveness

Students will learn how forgiving others helps them to live happier lives and they will make a plan to forgive someone in their life.

Lesson Background for Teachers

Trigger warning: Talking about emotions and situations where strong emotions arise can lead to students revealing personal information that might require follow-up by yourself or a school counselor. If a student reveals any worrisome information or reaction, please know your school protocol for providing support and resources. Before class, find out the school policy about reporting a concern about a student's mental health to a school counselor or administrator.

NOTE: Teacher feedback on this lesson indicates that students take this lesson very seriously and engage on a very deep level.

This lesson builds on previous lessons in this unit.

In order to understand forgiveness, it is important to understand what it is and is not. Bob Enright, a leading researcher on forgiveness, the steps to forgive and the definition. https://couragec.org/wp-content/uploads/Enright_Process_Forgiveness_1.pdf

Article by the Greater Good on the definition of forgiveness:
<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/forgiveness/definition>.

Key Terms for Students

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

ASSERTIVENESS Standing up for yourself and what you believe in while being respectful of others.

COMPASSION Being aware when others are sick, sad, or hurt and wanting to help.

RESPECT Treating people, places, and things with kindness.

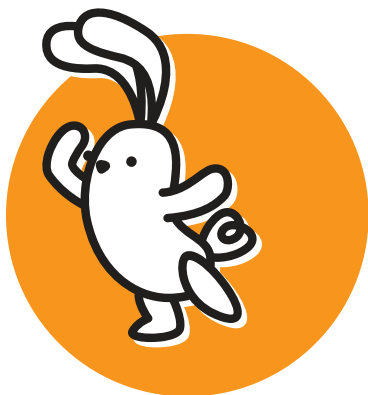
SELF-CARE Caring for yourself mentally, physically, emotionally and socially through your words, actions and thoughts.

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.



TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Discussing their issue with a trusted adult. While forgiveness is a crucial skill, some kids may be struggling with past traumas and need more assistance than you are able to provide in this activity. If trauma is revealed through this activity be sure to seek the advice of the school counselor.
- Review Feelings and Emotions, Grade 3 lesson to figure out how to manage strong emotions.

Resources

The New Science of Forgiveness https://www.uky.edu/hr/sites/www.uky.edu.hr/files/wellness/images/Conf14_FourCommStyles.pdf

8 Ways Forgiveness is Good for Your Health http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/25/forgiveness-health-benefits_n_6029736.html

How to Teach a Child Forgiveness <http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2013/02/27/how-to-teach-a-child-forgiveness/>

Share (3 mins)

Ask students to share their responses to the Home Extension Activity (in particular, their responses for question 2 about forgiveness).

Inspire

Discussion (10 mins)

We have talked about some healthy and unhealthy ways to communicate, like apologizing and gossiping. We also talked about assertive communication and what to say to communicate in a positive way. Today we are going to talk about forgiveness, which is another important part of interacting and communicating with others and being kind to ourselves. Can anyone tell me what it means to forgive someone? Why do you think forgiveness might be important?

Letting go when you are mad at someone for what they did. It might be for something big or small. You may forgive someone for something minor like bumping into you, or leaving you out at recess or forgetting to wish you a happy birthday. You may forgive someone for a big thing like telling you they aren't your friend anymore or hurting you on purpose. Forgiveness isn't easy and it might take a long time to forgive someone or for someone to forgive you. Forgiveness can build and keep friendships and relationships and help you to feel at peace in yourself.

Let's talk about what forgiveness is and what it isn't.

Forgiveness isn't:

- Forgetting what happened
- Saying what the person did is OK
- Feeling OK about what happened
- Making the other person apologize or waiting for them to apologize

Forgiveness is:

- Accepting the reality of what happened
- Letting go of bad feelings towards the person
- Not holding what someone did in the past against them
- Seeing what happens in the future actions of yourself or someone else

- *Forgiving someone whether they deserve it or not because you need to take care of yourself*

Why forgive? Research shows that if we are forgiving:

- *It makes us happier.*
- *It is a kindness to ourselves.*
- *It shows compassion to others.*
- *It improves our health.*



Empower

Activity Sheet (10 mins)

Hand out the Steps to Forgiveness activity sheet. Decide and let students know if you will be collecting the activity sheet. Read or have students read the Steps to Forgiveness and the example.

Now it is your turn! You are going to think of someone you want to forgive and write down how you would do that. If you have people you are struggling to forgive, it may be easier to work through a situation that is a little simpler for this activity. This will help you begin to develop the skills to forgive someone for something bigger. Allow time for students to complete the activity sheet.

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

- Why is it important to forgive others?
- What is forgiveness?
- What are the steps to forgiveness?

Reflection Questions

- How do you think forgiveness shows **self-care**?
- How do you think forgiveness shows **compassion**?
- Do you think forgiveness is easy? Why or why not?

Summary

Forgiving others plays a large role in our own health. In order for us to live happy lives, we must learn to forgive those who have hurt us and move past the hurt. When we are able to forgive someone, we start feeling better ourselves. Forgiveness is a form of self kindness, but it also allows others to be better versions of themselves than they were in the past.

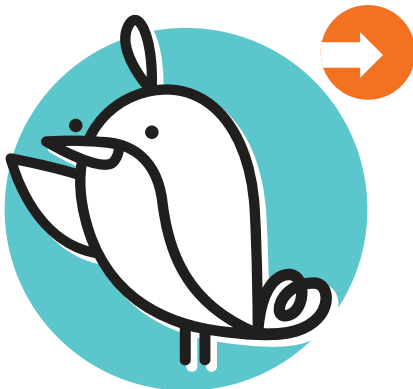
Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

Help yourself by committing to start forgiving someone in your life who has hurt you. Follow through with the plan you created to start forgiving someone in your life.

Kindness in Action

Write a forgiveness poem or letter to someone you would like to forgive. Focus on statements that begin with the word "I", not on what the other person may have said or done.



Steps to Forgive

Here are the steps to forgiving another person:

1. Figure out what happened and the consequences of the action.
Sometimes you don't even know how mad or sad you are until you think about it.
For example: When the person yelled at me, I felt really hurt and like I couldn't tell them something in the future
2. Decide you're ready to forgive the person and move forward. If you're not ready to forgive yet, go back to step 1. You do not need to forgive right away. For example: I'm tired of being mad and it's not helping anymore. I'm ready to forgive and move on.
3. Forgive. Accept that the past is in the past and you can only change the future. You do not need to excuse the behavior, but move forward. For example: Think: I know yelling at someone isn't right, but I know it happens. And/Or Act: tell the person you're not mad anymore and you forgive them.
4. Reflection. Explore what you have learned from this experience and how it will change how you do things in the future. For example: Next time someone yells at me, I'm going to say, "Don't talk to me like that" and walk away.

Now It's Your Turn

Who would you like to forgive?

Using the steps above, figure out a plan for how you are going to forgive that person.

1.

2.

3.

4.

