

LESSON

3

Choosing Kindness Unit Grade 8 • Ages 14-16

TIME FRAME

Preparation: 5 minutes
Instruction: 30 minutes

MATERIALS

Walking in Someone Else's Shoes
activity sheet, (p. 10)

Kindness in Action: Choosing Kindness
Home Extension Activity (one per
student)

RAK Journals

[Kindness Concept Posters:](#)

Assertiveness, Caring, Responsibility

LEARNING STANDARDS

Common Core: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.
SL.8.1

Colorado: Comprehensive Health S.4,
GLE.5, EO.a,b,c; Reading, Writing and
Communicating S.1, GLE.1, EO.a

SEL: Self-awareness, Social awareness,
Relationship skills

[Learning standards key](#)

Walking in Someone Else's Shoes

Students will practice showing empathy
for a person who is bullied by reading a
scenario written by one of their classmates
and answering a series of questions.

Lesson Background for Teachers

This lesson builds on previous lessons in this unit.

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 the rights and beliefs of others.
CARING	Feeling and showing concern for others.
RESPONSIBILITY	Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required in your life, home, community and environment.
RESPECT	Treating people, places, and things with kindness.

TIPS FOR DIVERSE LEARNERS

Students might benefit from:

- Using a highlighter to mark the dashed line so they clearly know where to stop.
- Posting the Problem-Solving Strategies for reference during this activity.
- Being mindful of the dynamics of the class during this discussion.
- Discussing feelings or reactions to the situations with you, the school counselor or another adult after class, particularly if they seem distressed during the discussion.

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.



Resources

Adapted from Colorado Uplift, Denver

Share (3 mins)

Ask students to share any music, TV shows or movies that they've seen or heard that promote upstander behavior or kindness. Have a class discussion about their findings.

Inspire

Walking in Someone Else's Shoes Activity (10 mins)

We are going to think more about what it means to choose kindness when faced with bullying. When we become **assertive** upstanders, we can help create a **respectful** and **caring** atmosphere or a culture of kindness at our school.

Hand out a Walking in Someone Else's Shoes activity sheet to each student.

On the shoe, write about a bullying situation you or someone you know may have faced. Only write on the shoe; do not answer the questions on the bottom half of the sheet yet. When you finish, turn in the sheet to me and I will give your sheet to someone else.

*On the sheet you are given, read what your classmate has written silently to yourself. Then write what you think that person may have been feeling and how, given what you know, you would have **assertively** responded to the bully. Then write how this response can create a culture of kindness and **caring** at school.*

Empower

Discussion (5 mins)

Have students return to the small groups from the previous activities, and discuss the bullying situation described on the shoe, what they thought the person felt like, and how they would respond.

If time permits, discuss responses and ask for comments about other ways to respond.

Optional Civics Activity

As part of a civics unit, have students research in small groups or individually why the American political system was founded to protect all voices. Students will be able to put themselves in others shoes as they conduct research to learn more.

Possible inquiry questions students could explore include:

- How does the American political system prevent a majority from becoming too forceful?
- What happens in countries where minority voices are not protected?
- Do you think all voices are protected in the United States?
- Do you think children's voices are heard?



Possible websites for research:

- iCivics.org – The Road to Civil Rights:
<https://www.icivics.org/teachers/lesson-plans/road-civil-rights>
- Democracy Web:
<http://www.democracyweb.org/majority/principles.php>
- Annenberg Classroom: Majority Rule and Minority Rights:
<http://www.annenbergclassroom.org/term/majority-rule-and-minority-rights>
- Bill of Rights Institute:
<http://billofrightsinstitute.org/engage/student-resources/>
- C-Span Classroom: <http://www.c-spanclassroom.org/>

After the students complete their research, have them prepare an oral presentation, a written report, a PowerPoint, a poster or another project that demonstrates understanding of their research.

Review the 8th grade rubric for your class with them so they know what your expectations for the assignment are and the project serves as evaluation for the activity.

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

- If you put yourself in someone else's shoes who is being bullied, how do you think they feel?
- What are some ways you can become an upstander to those who are being bullied?
- How can you create a culture of kindness and caring in our school?

Reflection Questions

- Are there times when it's more difficult to walk in someone else's shoes and be empathetic to someone's situation?
- Was it easy or difficult to think of a situation when you or someone you know was bullied? Why?
- What type of qualities do you think are important in being empathetic? For example, a good listener, someone who is patient, understanding, caring, responsible, etc.

Summary

By putting ourselves in someone else's shoes we can have more empathy in understanding what they might be going through. It's not always easy understanding what someone else might be going through, but taking time to reflect on how you would feel in that situation can help. Standing up for those who are being bullied can create a culture of kindness and caring at our school.

When you are walking this week, your shoes can serve as a reminder to always put yourself in someone else's shoes when you see a bullying situation. If you see anyone being bullied this week, remember to be empathetic and stand up for them. Intervene or seek help for the person to ensure the bullying behavior stops and the victim gets the help they need.



Act (2 mins)

Kindness Minute

There are many people in our community who do not have the same access to resources that we do. Share with a partner one way you will put yourself in someone else's shoes and make a difference in their lives by showing kindness. (Students may want to donate clothes to a local shelter, give shoes they've outgrown to someone in need, give lunch to a homeless person or donate canned goods to the food bank, offer to help a neighbor with a chore, etc.).

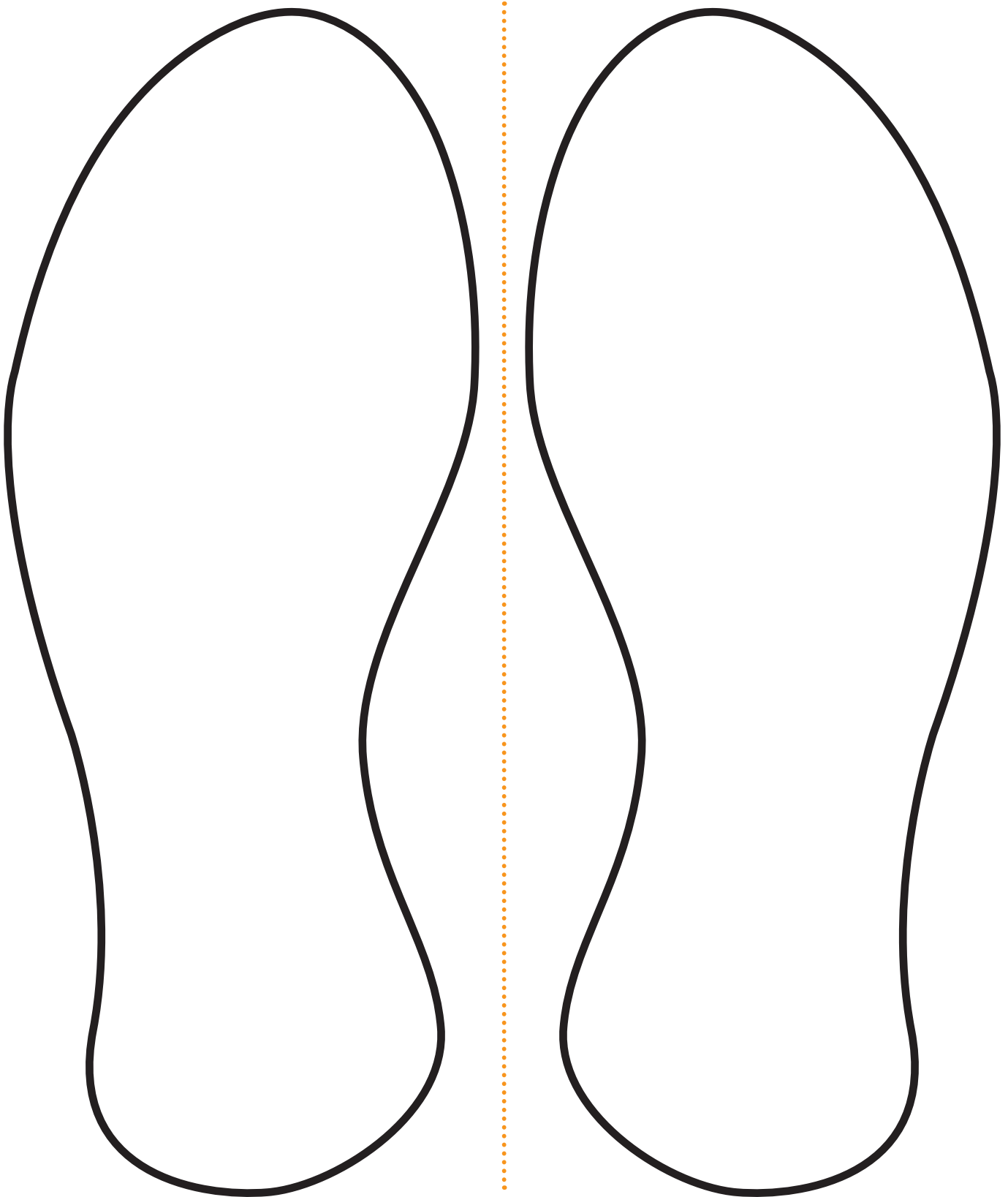
Kindness in Action

Complete the home extension activity.



Walking in Someone Else's Shoes Activity

Directions: Write on the shoe about a time you or someone you know was bullied. Then, pass the sheet to the teacher who will distribute your shoe to someone else. On the sheet you receive, answer the questions below the shoe about the situation described by one of your classmates.



Home Extension Activity

NAME _____

Background

As part of the Random Acts of Kindness program, we have been discussing bullying and what students can do to respond to bullying. Here is a summary of the information presented.

What is Bullying?

Bullying can be physical (pushing, hitting, hurting) or verbal (intimidation, gossip, put downs, being mean, criticizing, texting, writing notes.) Bullying doesn't just happen once, but is repeated behavior. It is done intentionally, and involves someone who is perceived to be more powerful using that power against someone else.

Why do people bully?

Bullies may want power or status in the group or to be in charge. They may not feel good about themselves and that is why they want to put down other people.

What's something you can do when you witness bullying?

We can become an upstander rather than a bystander. How? Look away or ignore the bully. Don't join the bully. Change the subject. Speak out. Get help from a trusted adult if needed.

Vocabulary Words

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|-----------------------|--|
| ASSERTIVENESS | Standing up for yourself and what you believe in while being respectful of the rights and beliefs of others. |
| CARING | Feeling and showing concern for others. |
| RESPONSIBILITY | Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required in your life, home, community and environment. |

Instructions

Review the vocabulary words and the background information presented above. Then ask your student what he or she has been learning about bullying and how they can be an upstander.

