

# The Ripples of Respect & Kindness

This lesson sets the foundation for the year ahead. Establishing a respectful and kind classroom will provide a safe and fun learning environment. Use the basic structure provided in this lesson and incorporate unique classroom needs.

## Respect Sub-Concept(s)

Self-Care, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

35-40 minutes

## Required Materials

- ☐ “Each Kindness”  
by Jacqueline Woodson
- ☐ Large bowl that can hold water
- ☐ One stone per student. This can be a natural stone or you can spray paint the stones red (each stone in future lessons has a specific color to easily differentiate the various kind acts that are noticed and accounted for by dropping the stone). If stones are not available, substitute with small colored items (Legos, coins, balls, etc.)

## Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



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See last page for details.



## Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Learn the definition of respect.
- Learn basic ways to show kindness and respect in the classroom and learning environment.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

Self-care matters! Fill up that water bottle before your students arrive today.

### Tips for Diverse Learners

- Illustrate the choices on the list
- Write the list in English and in another language, especially if there are ELL students in the class.
- Adjust the number of choices based on the ability and class size; 12 choices may be too many for your students to remember/process.

## Share

5-7 minutes

Ask students to define the word “kindness” and write down their definition on the board or type it on the smart board.

Then ask them to share a time someone did something kind for them and how it made them feel.

Now, ask them to define the word “respect” and write it down. Then show or write the Random Acts of Kindness’ definition of **respect**: *Treating people, places, and things with kindness.*

Explain we will be learning about how respect and kindness work together.

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## Inspire

12-15 minutes

**Read Aloud:** “Each Kindness” by Jacqueline Woods

**Read Aloud Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WINGYno4W14> (8 min)

Read or listen to “Each Kindness” by Jacqueline Woodson. Ask students to pay attention to the choices that were made and to the acts of kindness and respect (or disrespect).

After, talk about how the choices the girls made impacted the new student. Ask students what other choices the students could have made instead to make the new student feel more welcome.



## Empower

15-20 minutes

This activity mirrors the one in the story “Each Kindness,” which allows students to drop a stone in a bucket or container of water and observe and discuss the ripple effect.

**Kindness Pond:** Bring in a large bowl of water that can accommodate each student dropping a small stone into it and also accommodate the teacher (and possibly students) adding additional stones over the course of the entire RESPECT Unit (see other lessons for how the Kindness Pond will be used).

Each student takes a small stone, says something kind they have done that day or recently (or that someone did for them), and drops the stone in the water to demonstrate the ripple effect of the kind act. Remind students, as Chloe was reminded, that it can be a very small thing that they did or received (holding a door open for someone, smiling at a classmate, etc.). Remind students that even if they do not feel they have made kind choices so far today, they can always choose kindness moving forward. Kindness is always a choice and they have many opportunities each day to make kind and respectful choices.



## Reflect

3-5 minutes

Explain to students the Kindness Pond is going to be part of the classroom for a few weeks and ask them how they would like to use it. Decide as a class if you want to open or end each day with a Respect Reflection and get a chance to drop kindness stones into the pond. Remind students that kindness has a ripple effect that they can carry into their day or night.

You might also create a daily tally of how many stones you add each day or each week. If there is a lighter day, challenge students to look for more ways to be kind.



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The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>