

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

## SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

### CASEL COMPETENCY: SOCIAL AWARENESS

### SOCIAL SKILL: EMPATHY FOR OTHERS; KINDNESS

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#### BOOK INFORMATION

Book title: *Sidewalk Flowers*

Author: Jon Arno Lawson and Sydney Smith

Publisher and date of publication: Groundwood Books, 2015

ISBN: 978-155498-431-2

Number of pages: 24

Reading level or interest level: K-2

#### BOOK SYNOPSIS

This book has no words, just pictures. It shows the story of a little girl walking around the city with her father. Throughout the walk she picks wild flowers that she sees and places her flowers in unique places. She carefully places the flowers on a dead bird, on a person napping in the park, and through a dog's collar. When she gets home she puts flowers in her mother's and siblings' hair.

This story could be used to show students that there are always opportunities for us to do kind things. We can take time to notice those around us (people and animals) and show our concern and empathy in small ways.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVE

The goal of this lesson is for students to understand that there are always opportunities for each of us to show kindness to others and to leave others in a "better place" than when they found them. They can show small acts of kindness towards people they know, individuals they don't know, and towards animals.

#### LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

K-2 Materials:

- 3-5 green pipe cleaners for a stem and leaves per student
- 6 pipe cleaners of different colors per student (to form a flower)

3-6 Materials:

- Scissors for each student
- 3 sheets of green tissue paper for stem
- 6 sheets of tissue paper that are different colors per student
- Tape (or wire for older students)

Advance preparation:

- K-2: Make a flower out of pipe cleaners to show your class what they can look like. Google search for photos of pipe cleaner flowers and choose one that would be appropriate for your students' developmental level.
- 3-6: Make a flower out of tissue papers to share with your class, demonstrating how you make such a flower. In advance, search YouTube for a video-demonstration of flower making. There are several videos that range from beginners to more advanced skills. Choose an appropriate flower for your students.
- Make sure you bring enough supplies for each student.

### PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Explain to the class that the book does not have any words, but tells the story through pictures.

Ask the students if they have ever heard of "*random acts of kindness*." Explain that this is a story of a girl who performs acts of kindness towards different people and animals.

### READ THE BOOK

### POST READING DISCUSSION

Ask the students:

- Why did the little girl in the story decide to pick the flowers and give them away?

Explain that there may be a variety of reasons, ranging from boredom to really caring about someone.

- Do you think she planned to do this?
- Have you had opportunities arise when you did something kind for others, even though you did not plan the kind deed in advance?

Explain that every day, all around us---there are opportunities to be kind.

- What are your perceptions of how the people received the kindness---how did they respond to the little girl's kindness?
- How did she show respect to the animals in the story?

Explain that kindness can be given to animals and humans. Everyone appreciates kindness. Also, animals know when people are kind. Animals appreciate when people take care of them.

### POST READING ACTIVITY

K-2: Show the class your finished pipe cleaner flower. Demonstrate how to make the flower, as the students observe. Pass out enough pipe cleaners to make 3 flowers for each student. Then have them try it step by step while you monitor the process. Once the students have the hang of it, ask them to make two more flowers.

3-6: Show the class your finished tissue paper flower. Show them how to make it while they observe. Pass out enough tissue paper so that each student has enough material to make 3 flowers. A beginner's flower can be made from three pieces of tissue paper. After the demonstration, ask the students follow the step by step process. Walk around to monitor the students' flower making. After successfully completing one flower, ask the students to make two more flowers.

## CLOSURE

Encourage the students to give the flowers to different people who might need to be cheered up. Students may give the flowers to people they may or may not know.

Remind the students that *random acts of kindness* do not need to be flowers or gifts. Random acts, such as a smile, a compliment, or word of encouragement, tell others that they are valued. Also, explain the importance of being kind to animals. Kindness to animals is shown when you care for an animal, feed the animal, pet the animal, and spend time with the animal.



"Always leave things better than you found them...especially people."

Henry Cloud