

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

## SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

### CASEL COMPETENCY: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS

### SOCIAL SKILL: BEING KIND

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#### BOOK INFORMATION

Book title: Seeds and Trees

Author: Brandon Walden

Illustrator: Kristen and Kevin Howdeshell

Publisher and date of publication: The Treasured Tree LLC

ISBN: 978-1-947165-68-7

Number of pages: 28

Reading level or interest level: 2-6

#### BOOK SYNOPSIS

A young prince plays in a field that has two kinds of trees. Every day he plants the seeds, which are words that someone had said. When someone had spoken kindly the seed were green. When someone spoke unkindly the seeds were darker. The dark trees has thistles and thorns but because trees are for climbing, he still climbed on them when it hurt. When he climbed green trees, he felt safe and healed. When he got older he realized that the green and dark trees were battling to survive and he continued to plant new seeds that we given to him. The green trees cause life, joy and peace while the dark trees killed soil and were clothed in fear. Some friends wanted to play in the dark trees, while he had one friend who always had green seeds. The prince invites her to see all of the trees and she invites him to pick out a tree that is causing pain. She chopped down the tree and uprooted the tree. She then planted a new seed. She kept helping the prince cut down the dark trees and taught him how to strengthen the roots of the good trees. She invites the prince to throw the seeds in the ocean and he does. The prince takes his satchel of good seeds and moves on.

This book could be used to help students understand that they are affected by the things others say to them. They are also affected by what they say to themselves. They do not have to be unkind to themselves even if others are.

This book could supplement language arts lessons that teach metaphors, symbolism, or allegories.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVE

The goal of this lesson is for students to understand the importance of being kind to themselves and others, since being unkind can hurt them. Students should recognize when and how they can be kind to themselves. They should also identify who promotes kindness and try to act like that person.

## LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

Advance prep K-6

- Make two cups labeled with "Kind words" and "Unkind words"
- Put seeds in each cup

K-2 Materials:

- Seeds for each child

3-6 Materials:

- Lined paper for each child
- Pencil or pen for each child

## KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

Allegory- a story that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning

Symbolism- The use of symbols to represent ideas

Metaphor- a thing regarded as symbolic of something else, especially something abstract

Shame- painful feeling of distress caused by the awareness of wrong or foolish behavior

Unhindered- nothing in the way

Persistence- firm continuance in a course of action in spite of difficulty or opposition

Lack- the state of being without or not having enough of something

Admire- regard someone with respect or warm approval

Satchel- a bag carried on the shoulder by a large strap and typically closed by a flap

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Walk around the classroom with two cups of seeds. On each cup have written "Kind words" and "Unkind words". Walk around the classroom and say something kind to a few students and give them the corresponding seed. Explain that you could have also given them an unkind word. Share common unkind words that you hear from students. Ask those who received a kind word, what it felt like. Explain that when we receive kind words, we can "water it" by repeating kind words to ourselves and receiving kind words from others. Conversely, when we receive unkind words, we can "water it" by repeating unkind words to ourselves and receiving unkind words from others.

Explain that this book is about a Prince who has these same kind of seeds. They will see what happens as both kinds of seeds are given water.

## READ THE BOOK

## POST READING DISCUSSION

Show students the picture of the prince climbing on the tree. Ask them why he climbed them. Ask if he was required to climb them or just thought he did. What can we learn from him climbing the dark trees?

Show students the page where the green and dark seeds would war with each other. Ask the students if they ever feel like the words, or thoughts, they tell themselves conflict with each other. What kind of thoughts do they have? Which usually wins?

Show students the page introducing the one special friend who always spoke true. Reread that page. Ask if she reminds any of them of anyone they know? Ask why they enjoy being around that person? Ask them what they could do to become like her.

Show the page that shows the tree being uprooted and a green seed planted. Ask the students what had to be done before the green seed was planted? What would have happened if they planted the green seed next to the roots? Why do you think the Prince wanted to keep cutting down more trees? What does this tell you about trying to get rid of thoughts that are bringing you down.

## POST READING ACTIVITY

K-2: Give each student a seed. Ask them to walk around the classroom. When the teacher says "partner", students should find the nearest partner to talk to. Have each person say something kind to the other person and exchange the seed. Model what could be said so students have some help. After students do this a few times, have them share what it felt like to hear the kind words. Ask the students when they can say those same kind words to themselves.

3-6: Ask students to divide their piece of lined paper in half. On the first half, across the top, they should write, "When someone says \_\_\_\_\_ to me" and then on the other half, they write, I can say \_\_\_\_\_ to myself." Ask students to write on the one side, something they have heard someone say about them, and on the other side, on the same side, something that they can tell themselves instead. Ask the students to do this three to five times. Ask if anyone wants to share. When they share, ask the class what they can do to help the person have good thoughts about themselves.

## CLOSURE

It is important to be kind to ourselves and others. When we say unkind words to ourselves or others, it can really impact them. When someone is unkind, we do not have to believe them. We should not believe them. We can tell ourselves what we like about ourselves. And we can surround ourselves with people who are kind.



“Be careful what you water,  
for it will surely grow”  
- Brandon Walden