

We Are All Wonders!

This lesson introduces the idea of inclusiveness by examining why we might not include people in the first place. Often kids do not include others because they are comfortable with their current situation (and don't want to change it and risk losing that level of comfort) or are unsure about including others they do not know or who are different from them. This lesson will remind students that there are unique and special things about everyone and in order to be inclusive, we must take the time to really get to know them. This lesson sets a foundation for the later inclusiveness lessons

Inclusiveness Sub-Concept(s)

Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

30-40 minutes.

Required Materials

- The book *We're All Wonders* by R.J. Palacio or use a read-aloud from YouTube. [This one by Books with Blue](#) is good.
- I Am a Wonder space helmet handout (one for each students)
- Crayons/Markers - for students

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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AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.**
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Review the concepts of respect and caring.
- Explore the concept of inclusiveness through story and self-expression.
- Share something that makes them unique and wonderful to build a level of comfort and understanding within the class.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

The topic of inclusiveness is often overlooked once we reach adulthood. We seem to falsely assume that loneliness, bullies, and cliques are a thing of the past. However, it is just as difficult, if not more so, once we have developed our own comfort levels on different hot button topics, personality types, and overall approaches to life. They say you can't teach an old dog new tricks, but that's not true! It might be harder, but we CAN and SHOULD strive to grow in how we show kindness daily. This week, examine your surroundings at school carefully. Are there any new teachers that you are unfamiliar with? Maybe YOU are that new teacher and are feeling exceptionally shy. Identify three people this week to include in some capacity. Perhaps it's the old "saved you a seat at lunch" adage, an invite to walk the playground during lunchtime, or even a morning coffee to brighten their day! Your efforts to include others will definitely increase the kindness quotient in your school exponentially.

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Students should write their wonder on their sheet (so the teacher doesn't have to interpret the drawing only), so float the room to assist with needs from emerging writers or ELL students.
- Pay special attention to students who have visible special needs. Help them articulate additional special things about them so to not focus the activity on their limitations but more so on what makes them special (instead of different).



Share

3-5 minutes

So far in our units, we have been talking about respect and caring. We have talked about respecting and caring for ourselves, for each other, and for our environment, which is our classroom, our school, and our homes. What are some ways that we show respect and caring for our classroom?

Invite student responses.

What are some ways we show respect and caring for others?

Invite student responses.

What are some ways we show respect and caring for ourselves?

Invite student responses.



Inspire

7-10 minutes

In our next unit, we are going to talk about inclusiveness. Does anyone know what this word means?

Invite student responses.

It means that we show kindness to others by including them in the things we are doing. What are some examples of how we include each other in activities here in our classroom or school?

Prompt responses like including everyone in classroom activities, inviting kids to join them in games at recess, making room for someone at lunch, etc.

What might cause you to not include someone in these types of activities?

You will likely get a variety of responses here; ultimately drive the conversation to the idea that sometimes we don't include people because we don't know them very well. A personal example here would be useful!

Sometimes we don't always include others because we don't know them. In some situations, when you are in places with lots of people you don't know, for example, it is okay to stick with the group of people that you do know. It is important to be with people who are safe friends. At school, though, and in our second grade classroom especially, it is important to know everyone so that you are comfortable including everyone. Everyone has something wonderful about them that you may not know about. We are all wonders!

To understand this a bit better, we are going to read the book, We're All Wonders.

Read book to students & then ask the following:

What do we know about the main character in this book?

Responses will likely include that he doesn't look like the other kids. Encourage responses that discuss how he likes "ordinary" things like other kids.

It seems like people did not take time to really get to know this boy because of how he looked, and so they did not include him or treat him with respect or caring.

Have you ever heard the saying, "Never judge a book by its cover"? This means that we cannot truly know someone or something until we ask questions and learn about that person or thing. Look around the room. Do you think you know every wonderful thing about each of your classmates? There are probably some wonders that you don't know about.



Empower

5 minutes

Today we are going to do a fun activity that will help us get to know each other even better than we already do.

Pass out "I am a Wonder" space helmet handout.

On your "I am a Wonder" space helmet handout, I want you to write and draw something that makes you a wonder. This will ideally be something that your classmates may not know. It can be something short but it should be something unique; maybe something you enjoy doing, a special talent that you have, a special gift that you treasure, or something you have to do every day for a special health need (like wear a retainer to keep your teeth straight or use an inhaler so you can breathe easier). Maybe it's a place you have been or an experience you have had that helped make you, you! Again, try to make it something that not everyone already knows about you!

Do not put your name on your space helmet, though! When we are all done, we are going to try and guess whose helmet belongs to whom. So, spread out a little and try not to let others see your helmet!



Reflect

7-10 minutes

Once everyone is done with their drawing, you might hold them up one at a time and ask for a class vote on who the helmet belongs to. After a quick vote, ask the "real wonder" to stand up. You might make this even more empowering by telling students to say "I am the Wonder!" or "I am a Wonder!" when they stand. Hand the drawing to the student who claimed it and then move on to the next one.

After the last handout (which could be yours to help eliminate students from immediately knowing who the last student to be called is; they might be confused if there are two drawings left but seemingly just one student), remind students that everyone has unique and wonderful qualities about them. It is important to truly get to know someone so that you can include them. Everyone is a wonder and deserves to be included.



Extension Ideas

- Create a “We’re All Wonders” bulletin board and put the helmet handouts on the board; have students sign their handout. Give students an opportunity until the next lesson to add special qualities to each other’s helmets.
- Pair this lesson with the book *Wonder* or the movie

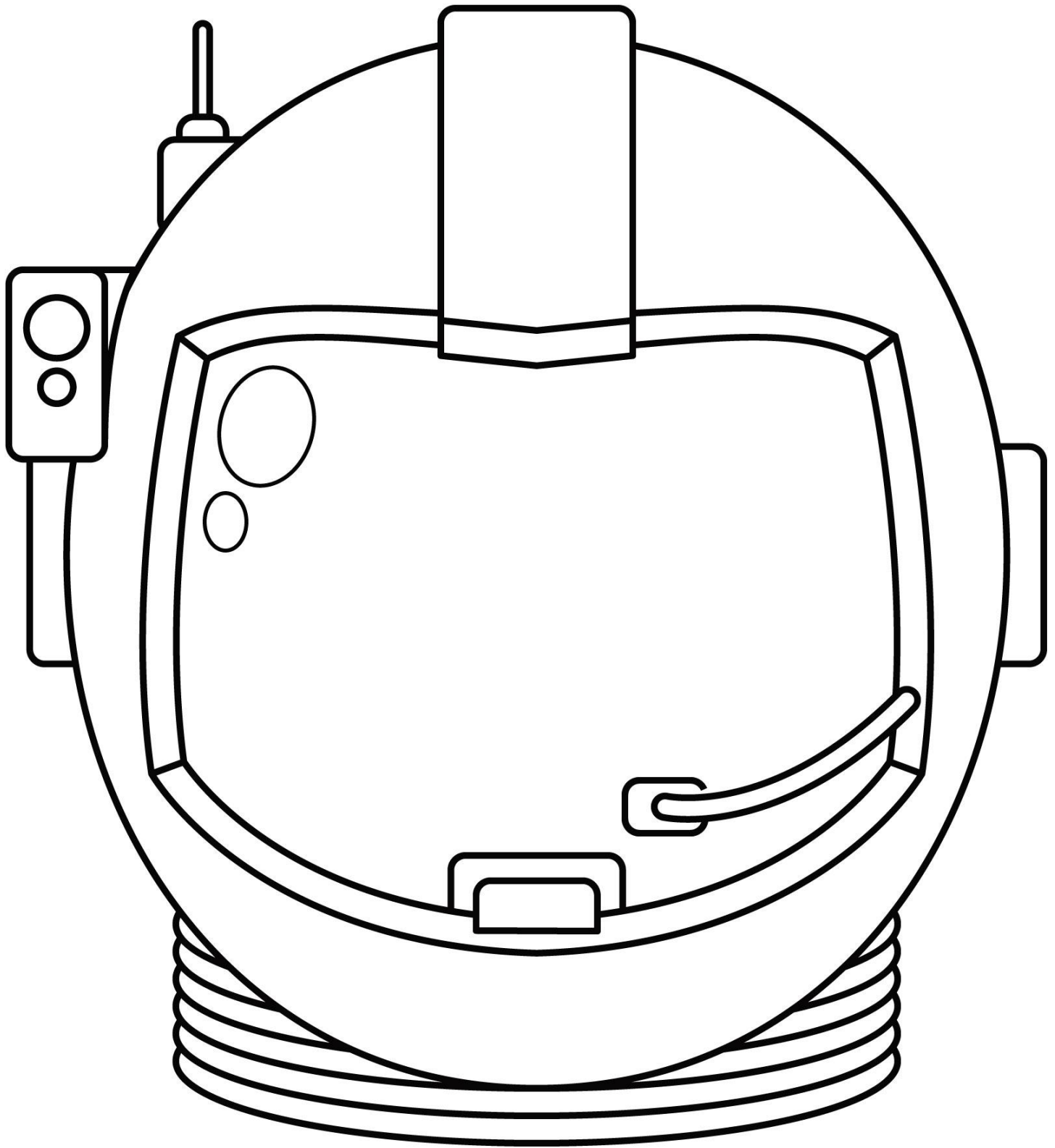


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AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

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/>



I AM A WONDER

**RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS
FOUNDATION®**