

Random Acts of Kindness has brought more meaning into my life, and I am committed to help spread the word.

— Carol, State Parent Facilitator, HI

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These Lesson Plans are a culmination of school-wide activities and classroom activities, ranging from grades K-12.

Lesson Plan

Bee Kind Hearts

Submitted by Karol Ann; Manistee, MI

Type of Activity:

Full school promotion of Random Acts of Kindness throughout the school and community.

Grade Level:

Prepared for grades one through four, but this project could be used in all elementary grades.

Time Frame:

One week. The results were so impressive that we extended it through the end of the month for a total of three weeks.

Materials Needed:

- * Parent letter explaining the Random Acts of Kindness program (See example #1)
- * Four "Bee Kind" hearts for each student (See example #2)
- * Large "Bee Kind" hearts to post throughout the school (See example #3)
- * Heavy weight string to run through the halls of the school

Preparation:

Prepare student packs to send home by running off parent letters and student "Bee Kind" hearts. Each student should receive two sheets of "Bee Kind" hearts (four hearts total) and one parent letter. Running the hearts on two different colors of pink adds a nice effect when they are hung. This also provides an additional opportunity for teaching a two-color pattern with younger students if they help you hang the returned hearts. Run additional large hearts to be posted throughout the school and classrooms as constant reminders to students to be looking for ways to "Bee Kind". These larger hearts may be colored and cut out by students. A bulletin board in the hall announcing that the whole school is celebrating Random Acts of Kindness week is a great addition. (See example #4) Pictures of students showing random acts of kindness or suggestions for random acts of kindness that students can perform can be displayed on this board.

Have the custodian or parent helpers hang heavy string down the halls throughout the building. This will be used to hang returned hearts. Just a single piece of tape works great for hanging hearts when they are returned.

Kick-off Day:

This may be done as a whole school assembly or in individual classrooms. If done as a whole school assembly, a motivational speaker on kindness, a singer, an author, or puppeteer can be used to deliver the idea of how one small act of kindness has a great impact as it spreads.

If doing this in individual classrooms, read the book, "Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch" by Eileen Spinelli. (Available through Trumpet Club Books) This is an excellent book to use as an introduction to the domino effect of kindness extended to one person and reaching many.

Before handing out the student packs to take home, discuss ideas of things that students might do to show kindness to other people. Sometimes they just don't have any idea where to start. Discuss that the purpose of this is not to get a reward for nice things that they do for people. But they will probably get back something anyway. Then see if they can come up with the idea that their reward will be the good feeling they will get.

Once students start bringing in their hearts with their act of kindness on the back, hang them on the string in the hall. Encourage them to bring in more by sending additional hearts home if they return the first four. Also have hearts available in the office for staff and parents to participate as well. Staff should be encouraged to write up hearts for students that they observe doing kind acts at school during the day.

Getting the Local News Media Involved: (See examples #4, #5, #6, #7)

Get the local news media involved by writing up an initial article explaining the program and inviting the local community to also get involved. Ask if they would be willing to do a follow-up article on the effects of the program and offer to go into the homes of your students to take pictures of some of the acts of kindness that were done. If they are supportive, this brings the whole community into the program and is a great public relations story for your school, not to mention being a tremendous self-esteem builder for students who really need it. Choosing your students who need that extra attention for these pictures has potential of being a turning point for positive behavior from them.

Additional Random Acts of Kindness Activity

Type of Activity:

Story reading followed by a writing activity (See example #8)
(If your school district uses "focus writing" developed by Dr. John Collins, this is an excellent opportunity to practice Type 3 or Type 4 writing.)

Grade Level:

This activity works best with 2nd grade and up.

Time Frame:

Forty-five minutes on day one followed by about fifteen minutes to a half hour writing activity on the second day.

Materials needed:

- * (Greta's Revenge by Steven J. Simmons & illustrated by Cyd Moore (Dragonfly Books Crown Publishers * New York)
- * light pink construction paper (cut into about 4 or 5 inch squares) scissors, crayons,
- * pencil a carnation for each student in your class
- * writing paper

Preparation:

Have each child cut out a heart from the pink construction paper square. Then have them write on it, "You are special to me." and decorate it as they desire.

Day one activity:

Invite a guest reader to come and read the book, "Greta's Revenge" by Steven J. Simmons. (You can also read the book yourself, but it gets parents involved this way.) Discuss the message of the book. ("Whatever you chant, whatever you brew, sooner or later comes back to you!") Decide how this might relate to the current Random Acts of Kindness celebration. Then pass out one wrapped carnation to each child and have them attach the heart that they made earlier. Give them instructions that day to pass the flower onto someone who they think needs a smile the most. Give them some suggestions; such as their bus driver, a grandparent, a neighbor, an elderly person in a nursing home, someone who has been sick or has had something sad happen to them, or a parent who has done a lot for them, etc.

Day two activity:

Have a classroom discussion about passing out the flowers the previous day. Talk about the reactions of the recipients and their feelings about giving the flowers. Then have each child do a short written paragraph answering the following questions.

- Who did you give your flower to?
- Why did you give it to that particular person?
- What was their reaction when you gave them the flower?
- What were your feelings after you gave them the flower?
- Is this something you would ever like to do again?
- If so, whom would you give your second flower to and why?

These paragraphs can be put into a class book for everyone to enjoy or they can be read aloud to the class individually or displayed on a bulletin board in the classroom or in the school. Whichever way it is done, it will make for a wonderful "feel good" day in class experienced by everyone. Kindness is contagious. Who knows? This may even help us to become a "kinder, gentler nation".

PARENT LETTER (example # 1):



Dear _____ Elementary Parents,

Beginning on February 11th we will once again be celebrating "Random Acts of Kindness Week" at _____ School. We will be recognizing this important week by encouraging all children to think about special ways that they can practice kindness towards others. Please help your child by signing the back of each heart describing the kindness your child has done. As each heart is completed, please return them to school to be displayed with the rest of the hearts from your child's classroom. Due to the tremendous success of last year's program and the positive impact it had on our students and community, we will be extending our program to last through the end of February. Your child may ask for additional hearts once the original ones are returned to school. We are hoping to fill the entire hallway with kind acts that our wonderful children have done for others.

When talking to your child about special things that they can do for others, please stress to them that these kindnesses should be done without reward.—They should also be done without announcing to someone why they are doing them. (We realize that they will need to tell you about them so that you may right them down, but we are hoping that many of these kindnesses will continue and become automatic behaviors without needing to be recorded.)

We appreciate any time that you might be able to spend with your child in discussing any suggestions for ways that they can show kindness towards others. Some possible suggestions would be helping a younger sibling, a kind note to a family member showing appreciation, offering to help a neighbor with shoveling, sharing with brothers and sisters, offering to help with family chores, cleaning a room without being told, writing to relatives telling them that they miss them and love them and completing homework without having to be reminded. This is only the beginning of ideas that could be used. Having your child come up with their own ideas will be even more meaningful to them.

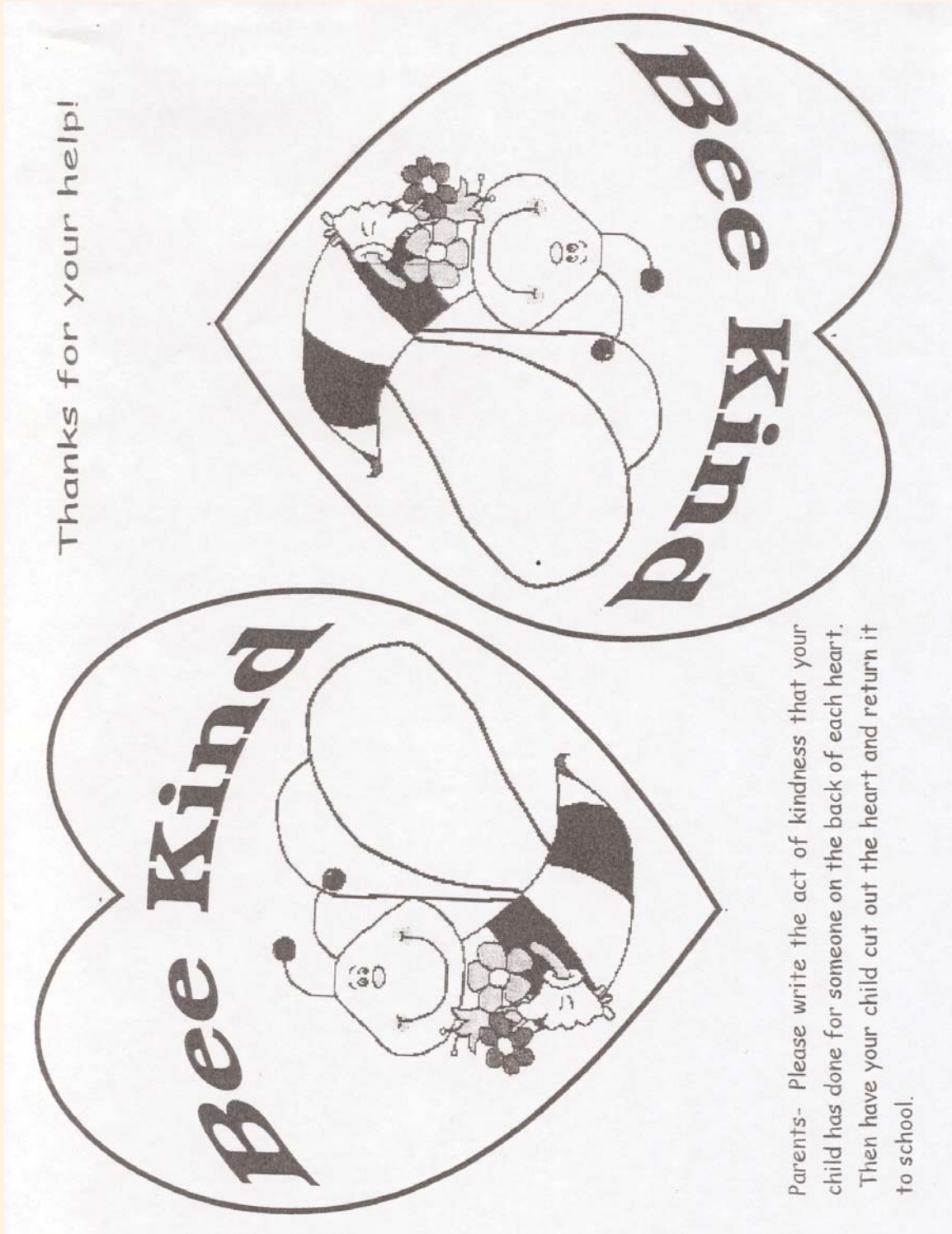
Completed hearts may be sent in one at a time or all together. Please feel free to come in and view our display of hearts down the hallway. We hope that you will enjoy this activity with your child. If you want to join us in recognizing "Random Acts of Kindness Week" with your own acts of kindness, we will gladly add your hearts to our display. Additional hearts may be picked up in the office.

Thank you for your help!

Elementary School Staff



Example # 2 (for students to return to school):



Example # 3 (Larger heart to post in the school):

