



Lesson Time: 20–30 minutes

Making Friends

Objectives & Outcomes

Lesson Objectives: Students will discuss ways to make friends and include others and write a story about welcoming a new student.

Lesson Outcomes: *Students will be able to...*

- discuss specific actions for welcoming and including others.
- explain why it is important to welcome and include others.

Subject Area Connection: Language Arts

Background

Elementary and primary students are struggling to assimilate to the norms of their peer group in order to be accepted, while simultaneously trying to establish a unique identity. By recognizing that individuality and acceptance are not mutually exclusive, students will begin to move toward a social environment in which each member of their class is accepted and valued.

This lesson will highlight specific actions students can take to make friends, join in, and welcome new students. Students will recognize the positive impact of inclusion on individuals and the group as a whole. Students will be motivated to work toward a unified classroom with an open and welcoming membership.

“Students will recognize the **positive impact of inclusion on individuals and the group as a whole.**”

Getting Ready

Teacher Preparation: To prepare for this lesson, write on chart paper: “One day a new student named *[name not in use in your class]* came to *[name of your school]*. (Optional, for younger students only)

Materials Required:

- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or marker
- pencils
- paper
- large chart paper (optional)

Introduction and Modeling

Begin by telling students that you are going to pretend to be a new student in your class. Invite students to tell you how they would make you feel welcome and included. If students’ answers are general (e.g., I would be nice to you), ask students to come to the front of the room one at a time and demonstrate their ideas. Record all concrete ideas (e.g., I would ask you to sit next to me during story time) on the board. Ask students to guess how you (as the new student) feel about your first day in a new classroom and all your new classmates.

Key Vocabulary

inclusion: being accepted.

unity: joining together.

empathy: having compassion for others’ feelings.

Procedure

1. Read the ideas listed on the board and discuss each one. Ask students to put themselves in the shoes of the new student. Would this action make them feel welcome? Would it help them feel at ease in the classroom? Add to the list as new ideas are mentioned.
2. Now look at the list from the perspective of students already in your class. Which actions are appropriate for all students? (e.g., It is not appropriate to say "Welcome to our class" to a current student. It is appropriate to invite a current student to join your game at recess.)
3. Discuss with students the overall concepts that can be drawn from the specific actions in your list (e.g., use kind words, listen to others, take turns, share with others, invite others to join you and/or your group, look for kids who need a friend, etc.). Explain that these are all things good friends do, and the best way to make friends is to be a good friend.
4. Ask students to think about their role in the class and their attitude toward making new friends and including others. Is everyone in the class friends with everyone else? Are there obvious cliques in place? Has your class recently been joined by a new student? If so, has the class welcomed the new student?
5. Pass out paper and pencils.
6. Explain that students will be writing a story based on the idea of being a new student in class. They can write from the perspective of the new student or from their own perspective as a member of the existing class. The stories should illustrate welcoming and inclusive conduct on the part of one or more members of the existing class.
7. Invite students to share their stories with the class or in small groups.

Discussion Questions

- Have you ever been the new student in class? If so, how did you feel about it?
- What are some things good friends do?
- What are some things friends should not do?
- Do you look for kids who need a friend all the time (not just when someone is new to our school)?
- We've talked about ways to include others. What are some ways to approach a person or group if you would like to make a new friend or be included?

Evaluation

Ask students to implement the ideas on the board and in their stories in their daily lives. If possible, leave the list on the board for a time. At the end of each day, ask students to tell you about what they did to join in or welcome and include someone else. You can also ask students to "catch" each other being friendly and inclusive.

Tips for Tailoring this Lesson

For Higher Grade Levels

- Have students type up and illustrate their stories. Invite a younger class in to hear your students read their stories aloud.
- Ask students to work in groups to write short skits about a new student in class. Have groups perform their skits for the class or the whole school.

For Lower Grade Levels

- Write a collaborative story on chart paper (see *Teacher Preparation* section) instead of individual stories. Give each student a line in the story (e.g., Then Alex asked Emily to join the kickball game. When Emily scored a run, Vanessa said, "Way to go, Emily!").

Alignment to Standards and Frameworks

Common Core State Standards: College & Career Readiness

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Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Anchor Standards for Writing

CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Social and Emotional Core Competencies

Social and Emotional Core Competencies: the five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective and behavioral competencies associated with social and emotional learning as identified by CASEL. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning www.casel.org

Self-awareness

Students are asked to explain the difference between teasing and name calling and why name calling is hurtful and disrespectful. Students are reminded that they can choose to have a positive or negative impact on other people.

Social Awareness

Students are asked to use verbal, physical, and context cues to identify the feelings and motivations of others and use this knowledge to describe the others' perspectives.

Relationship Skills

Students are asked to identify why conduct that hurts others is wrong and to describe how to seek and offer help when needed.