

## Caring

**Pre teach:** Tell the students that you are glad to be back today and that you will be discussing this month's trait *caring* with them. Ask the following questions and call on different students for answers. Below each question are examples of the type of responses you are looking for. You may need to rephrase the student's answers or guide them along.

*(Ask) What does it mean to be caring?*

1. Showing concern for the well being of others.
2. Using your words and actions to help someone.
3. Giving of yourself without expecting anything in return.

*(Ask) What are some words that describe the character trait of caring?*

1. Kindness
2. Thoughtful
3. Sharing,
4. Helping
5. Understanding

*(Ask) What are some ways we can demonstrate caring?*

1. Give to help others in need. For example: collect canned goods for local food pantries, donate gently used clothing and toys, send a card of encouragement to someone who is sick.
2. Show respect to people, property, animals, and the environment.
3. Be kind to everyone and do not exclude others from activities you are doing.
4. Listen to what other have to say.
5. Be helpful in all situations, at school, home and in your community.

*(Ask) Why is it important to be caring towards others?*

1. To make someone else feel better.
2. Helps us to feel good about ourselves.
3. We learn compassion for other and to look beyond our own needs.
4. May inspire others to be caring too.
5. Makes the world a better place.

**Book:** Read and discuss a book that teaches a lesson about caring. *(Book suggestions attached)*

**Activity:** Complete an activity to go along with your lesson *(Activity suggestions attached)*

**Closing comment:** What's important in life is how we treat each other. At our school caring is the rule! *(Pass out Caring bookmarks with below quote. Bookmarks are attached. Make copies as needed.)*

*Make just one person happy each day and in forty years you will have made 14,600 people happy for a little time, at least. ~Charles Willey*

## Caring Activities

### The Caring Hands (Suggested for all grades)

**Materials:** One quarter, a very cold empty glass bottle (small soda pop work great - bring two so you can do the demonstration twice)

Begin by explaining to the class that when people feel lonely or are hurting they may feel cold and sad on the inside, just like your friend here. (*Set your bottle on the table and give it a name. Wet the top of the bottle and place the coin on it, so there are not any gaps.*) But, when we reach out to them with caring and kindness, (*place your hands on the bottle to begin warming it*) by using our hands to offer help or to share what we have with them, you can make them feel better. They will most likely show their appreciation and say thank you. Tell the students to listen as your bottle friend wants to say thanks for your caring hands that warmed her up. (*The bottle will make clicking noises as your hands warm the glass, which causes the expanding air to force it's way out and push past the coin. The coin drops down with a click after each blip of air. Readjust coin as needed to prevent gaps.*) **Helping hands are caring hands!**

### Waves of Kindness (Suggested for all grades)

**Materials:** Beach ball

After you have discussed ways to be caring towards others, explain that one of the nicest things about caring for others is that they're likely to be kind to you in return. Suppose you threw this beach ball into the ocean. The ball would return to you, no matter how hard or far you threw it. The waves would keep rolling in, and before you knew it, the beach ball would come bobbing back to shore. Kind words and action are just like that. You toss them out, and before you know it, someone says or does something to show that he or she cares about *you*. **Caring makes the world a better place for everyone.** (Additional activity: Throw the beach ball to a student, have them share a caring action, and then throw it back to you.) (*Being Your Best, Barbara Lewis*)

### The Color of Caring (Suggested for all grades)

**Materials:** Two large clear drinking glasses, blue food coloring, bleach

Fill one of the glasses about a quarter full of water. Fill the other glass a little more than half with bleach. Put one or two drops of food coloring into the glass of water. Stir the water to distribute the color. Explain that the blue water represents how someone who is hurting, sad, or lonely might feel on the inside. You've probably all heard the phrase "feeling blue." But, when we take the time to be caring and kind to someone who is sad, we can make a difference in their lives. (Hold up the glass of bleach and say that this represents "caring." Then pour it into the colored water.) By caring for others, look at the difference we can make in how they feel. Watch as the water slowly starts to turn back to clear. (While you wait, it will take about a minute, you can discuss ways that we can care for others.) **Clearly, you can make a difference by caring for others!**

### Cards of Caring (Suggested for all grades)

**Materials:** None

Have students write notes of appreciation and encouragement to someone in the school e.g.: teachers, the principal, cafeteria workers, office staff, and bus drivers. Arrange with the classroom teacher to have the students personally deliver their caring cards.

## Caring Activities (continued)

### The Caring Chair (Suggested for all grades)

**Materials:** None

Bring a chair up to the front of the classroom and tell the students it will temporarily be known as the "Caring Chair." Invite students to come up one at a time to sit in the chair and give an example of a way to show *caring*.

### Changing The Flavor (Suggested for all grades)

**Materials:** Two drinking glasses, two cups of fine kitty litter, milk, chocolate milk mix, and two spoons.

The theme of this activity is: *Make the world a better place*. Explain to the students that milk tastes okay (*hold up a glass of milk*), but it tastes even better when you turn it into chocolate milk. What if you didn't have chocolate milk mix so you decided to add some kitty litter because it looks like chocolate milk mix? (*Stir in spoonfuls of the kitty litter until it looks brownish*). Ask the class if they think the kitty litter will make the milk taste better. Of course not! To make something better, we have to add the good stuff. Let's get rid of this other stuff and add some of the real chocolate mix to our milk. (*Take the other glass of milk and add the mix.*). Yum....this is delicious! The same way chocolate can make milk taste better, we can make our world better. When we mix in caring, kindness, compassion, helpfulness, and consideration for others into our world we can make a difference.

**Remember to add the good flavor of "caring" into our world and make it a better place for everyone.** (*Object Talks*, by Verna. Kokmeyer)

### The Caring Tree (Suggested for grades K- 3)

**Materials:** construction paper leaves - at least two for each student

Have each student write a "caring" comment or compliment about another classmate on a leaf. For example: Jill was kind to our new student, or Jack cares for our class when he volunteers to pick up trash. Draw a tree on a large piece of butcher block paper or poster board. Have the students take turns reading their leaves and putting them on the tree. To ensure all students are included, you may want to divide the class into small groups and have the group members write a comment for each other. (*The Best of Character*, D. Hodgkin)

### Ponder This (Suggested for grades 3 - 5)

**Materials:** None

Write this quote on the board, "*When you are kind to others, it not only changes you, it changes the world.*" ~Harold Kushner. Discuss with the class the meaning and personal application of this quote in our lives. Next, ask the students to write down an action they can do to show *caring* and improve the world. Share students' actions with the rest of the class.

## Book Suggestions for Caring

- Kindergarten:** Clifford's Good Deeds, *Norman Bidwell*  
Corduroy, *Don Freeman*  
Swimmy, *Leo Lionni*  
Rainbow Fish to the Rescue, *Marcus Pfister*
- First Grade:** Alexander and the Wind-up Mouse, *Leo Lionni*  
Big Al and Shrimpy, *Andrew Clements*  
The Mitten Tree, *Candace Christianson*  
Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge, *Mem Fox*
- Second Grade:** A Mother for Choco, *Keiko Kasza*  
Now One Foot, Now The Other, *Tomie dePaola*  
Knots on a Counting Rope, *Bill Martin Jr.*  
The Giving Tree, *Shel Silverstein*
- Third Grade:** Angel Child, Dragon Child, *Michele Maria Surat*  
Horton Hears a Who! *Dr Seuss*  
Peach and Blue, *Sarah Kilborne*  
Oliver Button is a Sissy, *Tomie dePaola*
- Fourth Grade:** Ferdinand, *Munro Leaf*  
Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters, *John Steptoe*  
More Random Acts of Kindness, *Conari Press*
- Fifth Grade:** The Rough-faced Girl, *Rafe Martin*  
Through Grandpa's Eyes, *Patricia MacLachlan*  
Pink and Say, *Patrica Polacco*

## Bookmarks for Caring

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