



# Room In The Inn: Spread Kindness

## Lesson Plan 10+ Grade

**Curriculum Connections:** Social Studies, English, Language Arts, Reading, Math

**Thematic Connections:** Citizenship, Community, Responsibility

### Overview:

The goal of this lesson is to create an attitude of giving that is year-round, not just in the cold and holiday seasons. The lesson also discusses the snowball effect of giving. It is important for this age group to learn about this for the following reasons:

- Prepares students for engaging in community action in the future
- Fosters regular habits of volunteering and giving
- Begins broadening students' understanding of the impact of their actions

### Goals for this unit:

- Build awareness of students' actions
- Begin laying a foundation for understanding the chain reaction of kindness
- Provide tangible means for students to contribute to making their community safe for all people

In this lesson plan we've provided suggested videos, discussion questions, and an activity – we strongly encourage group discussion and the activity to ensure students are learning through participation.

### Discussion Questions BEFORE Reading:

- What does it mean to be kind?
- How would you show kindness to someone in your school? Family? To a stranger?
- What happens when we show kindness to others?

### Reading Options:

**Read the children's book *Ordinary Mary's Extraordinary Deed* by Emily Pearson:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVSrz-5ps7g>

**Read the book *Pay It Forward* by Catherine Ryan Hyde:**

<https://www.amazon.com/Pay-Forward-Catherine-Ryan-Hyde/dp/1439170401>

## Video Option:

**Watch this video made by Lifevest Inside that shows the boomerang effect of kindness.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU> (4:52 min)

### Discussion Questions:

- The circle of kindness begins when a new student is asked to join a table in the cafeteria. This inspires the new kid to share a pencil with another student later in the day. What small acts of kindness have inspired you to share kindness with others?
- Do you notice when a circle of kindness is created in your life?
- One of the acts of kindness from the video involves a woman who is struggling to carry her groceries. A boy stops to help her carry the groceries across the street while a group of girls just stare in the background. How does our busyness or preoccupation with our own lives sometimes affect our ability or desire to show kindness to others?
- What is one way you can intentionally start the kindness boomerang this week?

**Watch this speech given by Maya Angelou about being a “Rainbow in someone’s cloud”:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXeCtaWXMH8> (1 hr 25 min)

### Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to be a rainbow in somebody’s cloud?
- What does being a rainbow require of us?
- How has someone else shown up as a rainbow in your cloud?
- How have you shown up as a rainbow for others?
- What is one thing you can do this week to be a rainbow for someone else?

**Watch the movie *The Antidote*, a documentary that follows a variety of stories about kindness :**

[https://www.amazon.com/Antidote-Kahane-Cooperman/dp/B08N56TS4Z/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&key-words=the+antidote&qid=1615049436&s=instant-video&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Antidote-Kahane-Cooperman/dp/B08N56TS4Z/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&key-words=the+antidote&qid=1615049436&s=instant-video&sr=1-1) (1 hr 40 min)

### Discussion Questions:

- How do differences sometimes make us feel less than? Have you ever experienced this?
- One section of the documentary follows an organization that works with Refugees. They talk about how past trauma can affect someone’s willingness to receive help. Why is it important to take the reception of our kindness into consideration as we show kindness to others?
- What is human dignity? What is the difference between simply giving a “hand out” and acknowledging someone’s dignity through kindness?
- The representative from one of the organizations talks about how unkindness begins when we determine that one person’s life has more value than another. Do you agree with this? Why?
- Boston Healthcare for the Homeless uses their foot clinic as a gateway to assisting their neighbors with larger needs. They remind us that offering the simplest acts of kindness can build enough trust to make larger impacts in one another’s lives. What are some small acts of kindness you have experienced that have led to more impactful relationships in your life?
- How does trust impact how we let others help us or how we help others?
- The documentary also introduces the idea that storytelling is a philanthropic act and that listening is the first piece of capital that we have with someone. What does this mean? Do you agree?

## Activity Options:

### Multimedia:

- Have students create their own kindness circle video.
- Have students interview multiple people in their community about what it means to be kind. They can write their own interview questions, record their interviews and compile them into a video to share with others.

### Art:

- Have students create a collaborative art piece.

### Service Opportunities:

- Have students make "take what you need" signs for school hallways.
- Make snack bags to distribute or donate.

