



### Being Mindful, Being Kind

The key message throughout these lessons is that being mindful of our own feelings and being mindful of how we treat others can help us be kinder. Additionally, taking care of our minds and bodies makes us healthy. Students will also begin to learn basic mindfulness strategies. Alternatively, you can replace the word mindfulness with self-awareness throughout the lessons. It's also important to note, the lesson plans may need to be adjusted by the teacher to accommodate the unique attributes and diversity of individual classes and students.

**Lesson Name: Cooperative Stations**

**Unit Name: Being Mindful, Being Kind**

**Grade Level: 3-5**

**Lesson Length: 30 minutes**

**Before beginning**, teachers should offer accommodations specifically mentioned in a student's IEP to support their ability to participate in the mini-lesson. A sample list of common accommodations and modifications to aid you in selecting appropriate supports for students can be found under "Additional Resources" [here](#).

### Lesson Objective(s):

Students will work together in small groups to solve various team building challenges.

Students will spend time identifying kind messages they can say about their group and identifying challenges and how they overcame them as a team.

### Essential Question (related to objective):

How can I solve problems in a small group?

### Equipment Needed:

- [How am I feeling? Emoji Rating Scale poster](#)
- Sentence starter cards
- 4-6 empty boxes of different sizes
- 1 physioball
- 6 hula hoops
- 1 long rope per group
- 1 tennis ball (or another ball) per group
- 4 mats or tarp per group

### CASEL Core SEL Competency:

Social awareness

- Taking others' perspectives
- Recognizing strengths in others

Relationship skills

- Communicating effectively
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively

### National Standards and Grade-Level Outcomes for K-12 Physical Education:

Standard 3: The physically literate individual demonstrates the knowledge and skills to achieve a health-enhancing level of physical activity and fitness.

- S3.E2.3 Engages actively in the activities of physical education class without teacher prompting.
- S3.E2.4 Engages actively in the activities of physical education class, both teacher-directed and independent.
- S3.E2.5 Engages actively in all of the activities of physical education.

Standard 4: The physically literate individual exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others.

- S4.E4.3a Works cooperatively with others.
- S2.E2.4 Reflects on personal social behavior in physical activity.

## Definitions:

**Reflection** is taking time to think about

- Something you may have learned,
- Your feelings, or
- Your behavior

**Kind messages**

- Genuine
- True
- Specific

**Respectful listening**

- Make eye contact.
- Be quiet while the other person speaks.
- Think about what is being said.

## National Health Education Standards & Performance Indicators:

Standard 4: Students will demonstrate the ability to use interpersonal communication skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.

- 4.5.3 Demonstrate nonviolent strategies to manage or resolve conflict.

## Lesson Overview:

In this mini-lesson the teacher will set up stations with various cooperative activities. The teacher starts the lesson by discussing the word “conflict” and at the end of the lesson students will have a chance to reflect on the activities and the ways they may have resolved any conflicts.

## Activity Progression:

To start the mini-lesson, have students check in using the Emoji Rating Scale.

**Example script:** “Before we get started let’s check in with ourselves. It’s healthy for us to take time to see how we are feeling. So, let’s look at our Emoji Rating Scale and see how we are feeling today, right now in class.

[Give students a few minutes to think about how they are feeling. They can share out if they would like or keep their response to themselves.]

If you would like to share how you are feeling right now you can or if not, that’s okay too! I’m feeling [insert an emoji] because [then a reason you are feeling this way].”

Introduce the word “conflict,” make sure students understand the difference between a conflict and an argument, and explain that they will be given an opportunity to practice recognizing and resolving conflicts respectfully by participating in a series of problem-solving challenges.

**Example script:** “We all value and appreciate our friends but sometimes we may not agree. The thing that most often challenges our friendships is conflict. Who knows what a conflict is? [Invite responses and call on several students.] A conflict is a disagreement. Conflicts can happen because we may want different things or because we may have a misunderstanding. Conflicts happen all the time because we are all different people and we don’t all think exactly alike and we can’t know what other people are thinking. But, if we are mindful, we can notice and recognize a conflict and we can catch it at the start. If we communicate and practice respectful listening, we can resolve a conflict without having it become an argument or a fight.

Today we are going to practice this skill. You will be working in groups of 4-6 to solve a variety of challenges. These challenges are like puzzles. There is a problem to be solved. We will have different ideas about how to solve the problem. Remember that our focus is not on how many problems your group solves or how quickly you solve them. Our focus is on recognizing when there is a conflict and practicing communicating with and practicing respectful listening to the people in your group.”

Review the cues for Respectful Listening.

Explain each station. The teacher can choose to use all of the stations below or use some of the stations plus stations of their own.

Mini-Lesson Name: **Cooperative Stations** Unit Name: **Being Mindful, Being Kind** Grade Level: **3-5**

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- Tower Transfer
  - Have four hula hoops on the ground in a row. Designate one hula hoop as the start where the box tower will be. Teams work together to dismantle a tower and rebuild it in another spot working within a set of rules. The tower is made of 3-4 boxes stacked with the biggest box at the bottom and the smallest at the top. To make this more challenging, add more boxes.
    - > Only one box can move at a time.
    - > A bigger box cannot go on top of a smaller box.
    - > Boxes can only be placed on top of each other (not next to each other).
- Dinosaur Egg
  - Teams work together to transport a dinosaur egg (large physioball) from one nest (a hula hoop) to another by lifting and carrying the egg using their foreheads. Try using other body parts to make this more or less challenging (e.g. forearms, elbows, one hand, one finger, knees).
- The Floor Is Lava
  - Set up a large mat or tarp with 4-6 polypots and have students start at one end. The mat will be the lava and the polypots will be “indestructible rafts”. The rafts are tricky and can only support one hand and two feet at a time. Any more than that and it will sink and the raft can no longer be used. This will require the group to be honest and show integrity. If anyone in the group touches the lava, the team must start again. For an extra challenge, if a raft is left untouched for more than ten seconds, it floats away and a polypot is taken away. To make this less challenging remove the raft rules.
- Ball Raise
  - Students all try lift a tennis ball with one finger touching. Every student must have a finger touching the ball as they raise the ball. Try using other objects like a pool noodle to make this more or less challenging for groups.
- Tie the Knot
  - Each team is given a long rope. Each team spreads out along the rope and picks it up. Students must then work together to tie an overhand knot in the middle of the rope with letting go of the rope or moving their hands.
- Know When to Fold
  - Students will all start standing on a mat or tarp and they must work together to flip the mat over without anyone stepping off. Another variation is they must fold the mat or tarp in half and then in half again without stepping off.

While students are working at stations, circulate among groups and provide support as needed. When groups have completed a challenge or are hitting a stumbling point, move them to a new activity that will provide an appropriate level of challenge for that group. It is important to have several more activities than there are number of groups to provide this flexibility. Teachers can do this by having duplicates of the same station so that more than one group can try a challenge at the same time. Or provide each group with all, or as many of, the materials needed for each activity.

Ask students to clean up the equipment at the challenge stations and then choose a card scattered on the floor in front of the equipment collection area. The cards will have either the beginning of a sentence or sentences with blanks to fill in. Students will choose a card they are able to complete and bring it to the circle. It is important to have more card choices than there are students, as choice is important here.

Once students are all seated with their cards, tell students that we are going to practice the skill of reflection and kind messages, depending on the card they selected. When it is one student’s turn, they will read their card and complete the statement while the other students practice Respectful Listening. Call on several students or if time permits, go around the circle giving each student a turn to share their response with the group.

**Example script:** “I saw everyone working well together through conflicts and challenges. It’s okay if your group didn’t complete a challenge as long as you were practicing Respectful Listening and resolving conflicts. Now we are going to take some time to reflect. We talked about reflection during another class time. Reflecting is thinking about something you learned, your feelings or your behavior. We are also going to get a chance to practice giving kind messages depending on which card you picked up. Remember kind messages should be genuine (that means you actually feel that way) true and specific. Who would like to read their card and answer first?”

At the end of class have students check in with themselves again using the Emoji Rating Scale.

**Mini-lesson adapted from Amanda Amtmanis, Middletown City Schools, CT.**

## Modifications/Differentiation:

- Have written instructions at each station.
- Be sure to provide options for activities where students may not be able to participate because of a physical disability. For example, instead of hands use feet.
- Allow students who are uncomfortable being in close proximity or touching other students to observe or serve in leadership roles within a group.

## Checks for Understanding:

- What is conflict?
- What are ways you can resolve a conflict with a friend?

## Kind Message Sentence Starters

I was proud of my group when \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ activity was the hardest because \_\_\_\_\_.

I was proud of myself when \_\_\_\_\_.

I was proud of \_\_\_(person's name)\_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.

# Kind Message Sentence Starters

List these on the board or print them and have them around the room for students to choose from if needing help.

It was helpful when you \_\_\_\_\_.

I really like when \_\_\_\_\_.

You did a good job when you \_\_\_\_\_.

You're really good at \_\_\_\_\_.

I like being your partner because \_\_\_\_\_.

Grades 3-5



# Sentence Starter Cards

I was proud of my group

when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_

activity was the hardest

because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

I was proud of myself

when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

I was proud of \_\_\_\_\_

(person's name)

when \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

Grades 3-5

