

Lesson Plan: The Reciprocity of Kindness & Connection

National Day Classroom

Target Grade Level: K-8th Grade

Duration: 4 Days (Flexible)

Core Subject Integration: Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), Language Arts, Physical Education, and Civics.

Day 1: The Power of the Spoken and Written Word

National Days: National Say Something Nice Day & National Pen Pal Day (June 1)

- **Objective:** Students will understand the impact of intentional, kind words and learn the structure of written correspondence.
- **Whole-School Launch:** Start the morning with a "Compliment Chain." Every student writes one nice thing about a classmate on a strip of colored paper, and the strips are linked together to hang in the hallway.

Grade-Specific Activities:

- **Grades K-2 (Friendly Drawings):** Students pair up and verbally say something nice to each other. Then, they draw a picture for a "Pen Pal" in another classroom or a local nursing home, writing a single, simple sentence: *"You are special because..."*
- **Grades 3-5 (The Art of Letter Writing):** Teach the formal components of a letter (Heading, Greeting, Body, Closing). Students draft a letter to a Pen Pal in a different grade or school, focusing on asking engaging questions and sharing a genuine compliment.
- **Grades 6-8 (Constructive Uplift):** Discuss the difference between a superficial compliment ("I like your shoes") and a character-based compliment ("I appreciate how inclusive you are during group work"). Students write a letter of appreciation to a school staff member (janitor, cafeteria worker, secretary) recognizing their behind-the-scenes impact.

Day 2: The Rhythm of Communication

National Days: [National Play Catch Week](#) & [World Bicycle Day \(June 3\)](#)

- **Objective:** Students will use physical activity to understand active listening, teamwork, and the "give-and-take" nature of healthy relationships.

Grade-Specific Activities:

- **Grades K-2 (The Conversation Ball):** In PE or recess, students stand in a circle and roll or toss a soft ball to a peer. Before throwing, they must call out the person's name. When the peer catches it, they say "Thank you, [Name]!" This teaches foundational turn-taking and eye contact.
- **Grades 3-5 (Active Listening Catch):** In pairs, students toss a ball back and forth. Partner A shares a short story about their favorite hobby. Partner B can only catch and throw the ball; they cannot speak until Partner A is done. Then, Partner B must repeat back what they heard before switching roles.
- **Grades 6-8 (The Ecosystem of Community):** Tie in *World Bicycle Day* by discussing how a bicycle relies on connected gears, chains, and wheels to move forward. Transition to an outdoor activity where students play a team-building "catch" game (like Ultimate Frisbee or a continuous passing circle) where the goal is only achieved if *every* team member touches the ball before a point is scored.

Day 3: Celebrating Community

National Day: [National Doughnut Day](#) (June 5)

- **Objective:** Students will celebrate their community efforts, practice hospitality, and experience the joy of sharing.
- **The "Doughnut" Metaphor:** Use the doughnut shape to teach a lesson: The dough represents the community wrapping around and supporting individuals, while the hole in the center represents the space we must leave open to welcome *new* people in.

Grade-Specific Activities:

- **Grades K-2 (Sweet Sharing):** Provide students with paper cutouts of doughnuts. They color them and pass them to a friend with a verbal "Thank you for being my friend." Serve actual mini-doughnuts (or a dietary-friendly alternative) as a community snack time where students practice manners.
- **Grades 3-5 (Delivery of Kindness):** Remember those letters written on Day 1? Today, students personally deliver their Pen Pal letters. Pair the delivery with a sweet treat. Students spend 15 minutes sitting and chatting with their Pen Pals while enjoying their snack.
- **Grades 6-8 (The "Doughnut" Café Hosts):** The middle schoolers take on a leadership role. They host a "Gratitude Café" in the morning or during lunch. They serve treats/doughnuts to the school staff or younger students, acting as hosts, welcoming people, and delivering the staff appreciation letters written on Day 1.

Assessment & Reflection (End of Week)

To wrap up the unit, have students complete a quick reflection exit ticket based on their grade level:

- **K-2:** Draw a picture of how you made someone smile this week.
- **3-5:** Write a paragraph explaining why "communication is a two-way street," using the game of catch as an example.
- **6-8:** Reflect on the school culture. How did focusing on intentional kindness this week change the energy in the hallways? What is one habit from this week you want to keep doing?



