

LESSON 3.1 - WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Sharing our Strengths

Lesson Spotlight

I can share my Strengths with others.

Materials

- Sources of Strength wheel poster from Lesson 1.7
- Music and speaker (optional)
- Sharing My Strengths worksheet (page 128)
- Coloring utensils

Preparation

- Prepare to share an example of a time you regulated your emotions
- Complete your own Sharing My Strengths worksheet as an example
- Copy Sharing My Strengths worksheet, one per student

Time

30 minutes

SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making

Instructor Overview

In Unit 2, we learned about how our Strengths are helpful to us. In Unit 3, we explore how we can be a Strength for others in our lives. Having a sense of agency, capacity, and purpose is powerful. Kindergarten students are not just passive participants in their lives; they can be powerful agents of hope, help, and strength in their world. This lesson engages students in a discussion about noticing when someone is hurting and how they can be a helper. It concludes with an activity highlighting how we can help by sharing our Strengths with others.

Talking Circle (5 min)

Invite students to the Talking Circle and welcome them as they arrive. “Today, we will begin our last unit of Sources of Strength this year. Remember, in the first unit, we learned about the Sources of Strength wheel, how we are all connected by our Strengths, and how we are connected to the people around us.”

“In Unit 2, we learned that our brains and bodies communicate with us, and when we listen they can help us know when we need to regulate ourselves. We have also been practicing ways to regulate our big emotions. Remember, to regulate our emotions means to find the right balance. I regulated myself recently by _____.”

Share how you regulated recently using a Strength or strategy discussed in previous lessons (i.e., ‘Recently I was feeling really nervous about a meeting so I regulated my emotions by asking Mrs. _____, my Positive Friend, to take a walk (Healthy Activity) with me around the school to help calm my nerves.’).

“There are many different ways we can use the Strengths around the Wheel to regulate. We can go to a person we trust or do an activity we enjoy. Even getting a drink of water takes care of our health, and helps us regulate.

“Listening to our brain and body helps us know how we need to regulate. Let’s turn to a partner, and share the name of a person or an activity from the Wheel that helps us regulate. Maybe it’s a friend or family member, or maybe it’s reading a book or sitting with a pet.” Reference the Strengths Wheel. Pair share.

“We have also learned that sometimes we can regulate our emotions by ourselves and other times we may need someone else to help us. When others help us regulate, we call that co-regulation.

“There are times we can use our Strengths to help ourselves, and other times we can share our Strengths to help those around us. If you have ever helped someone when they were feeling sad, give yourself a big hug.” Model.

“If you have ever helped someone clean up a spill or mess, give a silent cheer.” Model.

“If you have ever gone to an adult for help when a friend got hurt, pretend to put a bandage on your knee.” Model.

“These are just a few ways we can use our Strengths to help others in our community. We can be powerful helpers that make our classroom and school safer places

where everyone can get help when they need it. This helps us all feel like we belong and are connected.

“There are many ways we can help others if we know they are hurting. What might be some clues that tell us someone is hurting?” Get a few Popcorn answers (sad face, someone is all alone, hurt somewhere on their body, crying, etc.).

“That’s an important list of different ways we might notice others are hurting. It might be someone who has hurt their body because they fell, or it could be someone having big emotions like anger, worry, or sadness. When we notice and listen to what others are feeling, we are practicing empathy. Empathy is trying to understand what someone else is feeling.”

How Might I Help (8 min)

“Now, let’s think of some different ways that we can help those who are hurting. Volunteers will be showing us how we can be helpers as they act out a few different scenes. Can we get two volunteers to show us how we can be helpers?” Invite students to the front and designate one as the helper and the other as the one who needs help.

“Imagine you are at recess, and you see a friend that just fell off the monkey bars and they are crying. How will you help them? Volunteers: can you act out the scene and show us how you would help your friend?” Give the two volunteers a few moments to act out the scenario.

“Yes, we might ask if they are OK, we might go to an adult to ask for help, or we might ask for permission to get an ice pack or a bandage for the student who is hurt. Let’s give our two volunteers a round of applause.

“Let’s do one more example together. Can we get two more volunteers to help?” Invite students to the front and designate one as the helper and the other as the person who needs help.

“Imagine there is a new student in our class, and they are worried about who to play with at recess. Volunteers: can you act out the scene and show us how you would help the new student?” Give the two volunteers a few moments to act out the scenario.

“Inviting a new student to play with us at recess is an act of Generosity.” Reference the Strengths Wheel.

“When we introduce a new student to our friends, they may find a few Positive Friends. As we do this it helps everyone in our



EXTENSIONS

Everyday Application

- Be on the lookout for students showing examples of using their various Strengths. Acknowledge them with an Affirmation naming the Strength.
- Highlight the Strength of Generosity in students as you see it play out throughout the day.
- Intentionally invite students to share their Strengths with others.
- Brainstorm ways that our class can practice being helpers in the lunchroom.

Read Alouds

- Fraidy Zoo*. Heder, T. (2013). New York: Abrams Books for Young Readers.
- Bear Feels Scared*. Wilson, K., & Chapman, J. (Illustrator). (2008). New York: Scholastic.
- Bear Feels Sick*. Wilson, K., & Chapman, J. (Illustrator). (2007). New York: Scholastic.
- The Bear Who Shared*. Rayner, C. (2011). New York: Dial Books.
- Should I Share My Ice Cream?* Willems, M. (Author & Illustrator). (2011). New York: Hyperion Books.
- Emily’s Sharing and Caring Book*. Post Senning, C., Post, P., & Landry, L. (Illustrator). (2008). New York: Harper Collins.

Home Connection

- Who can you offer to help in your home this week?

Academic Integration

- Show students the word ‘HELP’ and discuss the sounds of each letter. Talk about how each letter by itself doesn’t mean much, but all together, they create a powerful word.
- Reading:** When doing read-alouds throughout the week, invite students

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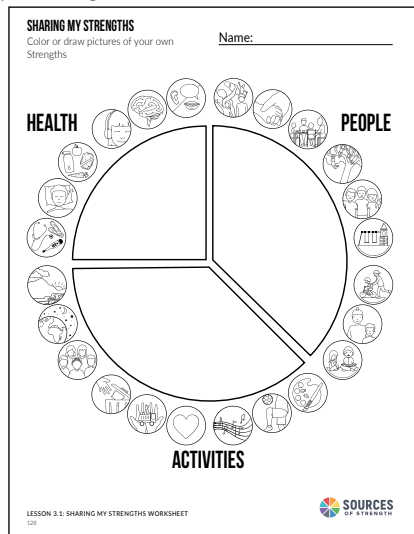
Sharing our Strengths

community feel connected. Let's give our two volunteers a round of applause.

"These are all examples of ways we can help others when they are hurt or feeling big emotions. Being a connector to help is a way to be a Positive Friend."

Sharing My Strength (10 min)

"When we help others, we often share our Strengths. We're going to do a coloring activity of your Strengths." Hold up your sample copy of the Sharing My Strengths worksheet.



"You can color the pictures that show your Strengths for each part of the Wheel, or you can draw your own pictures." Hand out the Sharing My Strengths worksheet and have students return to their desks. Consider participating alongside students. The idea is that each student's Wheel will look different. It is not important to color everything, but encourage students to color or draw something in each portion of the Wheel. Feel free to play music while students are coloring. Move around the room supporting students as they work. Give students a two-minute warning.

"I saw some nice coloring and drawings as I moved around the room. Let's return to the Talking Circle to share some of our Strengths. Bring your worksheets with you."

Closing Talking Circle (7 min)

"These are all Strengths we have in our lives, and when we notice someone is hurting, we can share these Strengths with them to get them the help they need."

"If you saw someone who was hurting, who is a person on your Wheel you could connect them to? Turn to a partner and share." Reference the People portion of the worksheet. Pair share.

to look for characters using or sharing the Strengths from the Strengths Wheel.

Talking Circle Prompts

- Following the Home Connection - "What was a way you shared your Strengths at home this past week?"
- "What are ways you can share your Strengths with others after school?"

Creative Expression

- On one side of a paper, have students draw a picture of a time they needed help. On the other side, have them draw how they felt after being helped.

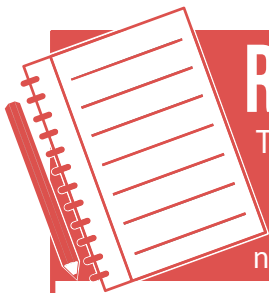
Transitions

- Invite students to share Strengths and strategies that would help during transition times throughout the school day.
- Rotate through the students' suggestions during daily transitions.

“What are activities you enjoy that you can share with someone else?” Reference the Activities portion of the worksheet. Get a few Popcorn answers. Be sure to call on a diverse set of students.

“We have learned a lot about ways to regulate our emotions. Who would like to share a healthy way you regulate?” Reference the Health portion of the worksheet. Get a few Popcorn answers.

“Let’s all hold up our worksheets. They all look so unique and different. Notice all the different Strengths we can share with each other. Together, we get to use our unique Strengths to be helpers to others and create a safe and brave space for everyone.”



REFLECTION

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WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE LESSON 3.2

Celebrating the Helpers

Time

20 minutes

Preparation

None

Materials

Talking Piece

SEL focus

Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills

Instructor Overview

The Talking Circle share in this lesson centers around noticing and celebrating times of being a helper. As we learn new skills, repetition is beneficial and leads to growth and mastery. While some students may already be showing proficiency with offering Affirmations, Apologies, or Aha's, this Celebration Lesson provides everyone with opportunities to grow these skills. The sharing within the Talking Circle provides additional modeling of the celebrations for students who require more practice.

Talking Circle (20 min)

Invite students to the Talking Circle, and welcome them as they arrive. "Last time, we talked about using our Strengths to help those around us. There are many ways we can use our Strengths to be helpers, like being generous with our kind words. What are some kind things we might say to someone?" Get a few Popcorn answers (Thanks for being my friend, I like your drawing, Let's play together at recess, etc.).

"Great ideas! How might we help someone new to our classroom?" Get a few Popcorn answers (show them where the bathroom is, teach them how to make their lunch choice, etc.).

"Those are excellent examples of how we can help a new student!"

"We've been learning about Affirmations, Apologies, and Aha's all year. These celebrations are ways we can help ourselves and others. When we notice and name the good things others have done and give them an Affirmation, it can remind them of their Strengths and how they've grown.

"When we offer someone a Helpful Apology, we work to repair relationships and Help the hurt.

"It's an Aha as we continue to grow and learn new regulation strategies that help us be healthy. Each of these celebrations is a way for us to use our kind words to help ourselves and others.

"Let's share some Aha's. We'll celebrate ourselves by sharing examples of ways we've helped others since our last lesson." Get four to five Popcorn answers. You are encouraged to call on a diverse group of students who you may not hear from as often. Remember to share your own example of how you've helped someone recently.

"Well done, kindergartners! You've been busy helping others! Let's do a Full Circle share. This time, you can choose to share an Affirmation for someone you saw being helpful to others, offer an Apology, or share an Aha about something you have learned or grown in recently. Who would like to get us started?" Pass the Talking Piece to the volunteer and continue sharing around the circle. Be sure to offer another chance to anyone who passes.

"Hearing these celebrations of ourselves, others, and our healthy friendships has been wonderful. Thank you for sharing!"

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LESSON 3.5 - WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Come Join Us!

Lesson Spotlight

I can be generous with my actions, words, and thoughts.

Materials

- Talking Piece
- Materials
- The Regulation Railroad visual (page [125](#))

Preparation

Read directions for Swim Around Silly

Time

30 minutes

SEL Focus

Social Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making, Relationship Skills

Instructor Overview

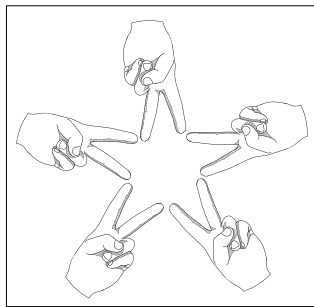
In this lesson, the class will play a game that encourages inclusion through a silly, fun way to connect. The class is then invited to take a trip along the Regulation Railroad with an opportunity to practice regulation through a loving-kindness mindfulness activity. The class then will share ways they can be generous in the coming days.

Swim Around Silly (10 min)

Get five volunteers to help demonstrate the game for the class. Students will be walking around the circle space while pretending to swim. You will name one of three formations prompting the students to rush around and create those formations with the designated number of people.

Formations:

- **Seaweed!** Three people. Three students stand shoulder to shoulder in a line with their arms waving back and forth above their heads.
- **Octopus!** Four people. Four students stand with their backs together and wave their arms out in front of them representing eight legs.
- **Starfish!** Five people. Five students will form a small circle then make a “V” with their pointer and middle finger of one hand to represent one leg of the starfish. Students then reach their “V” shaped starfish leg to the center of the group until each student’s fingertips touch the side of their neighboring partners’ fingertips to form the star shape.



As the game is played there will be students who cannot find a group with the right number. These students will then look around for a group that invites them to join their formation. It's OK that some groups will ultimately have more people than the directions indicate because this game is all about inclusion!

Invite students to the Talking Circle and welcome them as they arrive. **“Welcome to our Sources of Strength time. Today, we are going to begin with a game. This game is called Swim Around Silly. In a moment you all will have the chance to stand up and join in but first, can we have five volunteers to show us how to play the game?”** Get five volunteers.

“Now the five of you will pretend to swim around silly inside the circle. You could do the backstroke, the dog paddle, or you can swim like a fish. You decide.” Have the volunteer students mingle about doing their silly swimming.

“As you all are swimming around silly I will shout out three different things from the ocean that you will try and create. The first one is, ‘Seaweed!’ When I say seaweed you need to form a group of three people, standing shoulder to shoulder in a line and waving your arms over your head like seaweed swishing with the waves.” Help the students gather into one group of three and a pair of students will be looking for a third person.

“These two students are still looking for another person to form a group of three.” The instructor joins the two students forming a second group of three.

“Now, whenever you hear ‘Swim Around Silly,’ go back to swimming around silly in the circle.” Have the volunteer students mingle about doing their silly swimming.

“Next, I might say, ‘Octopus!’ When you hear ‘octopus,’ you will try to form a group of four. You will all stand with

your backs to one another and wave your arms out in front of you, forming the octopus’s eight legs.” Help the students gather into one group of four, and one student will not be in a group.

“Once you have formed a group of four, you may invite others who have not found a group yet. Remember to say, ‘Come join us!’ It’s OK in our game to have an octopus with ten or twelve legs.

“The final prompt I will shout out is, ‘Starfish!’ If I say starfish, you will need to make groups of five and stand in a circle facing each other. Put out one hand with your pointer and middle finger in the shape of the letter V, then move your hand toward the center of the circle to make the star all together.” Help the students gather and create a star with their fingers.

“Then don’t forget if there are people still swimming around silly without a group, invite them in by saying, ‘Come join us!’ We can have stars with five, six, or seven points.” Play several rounds and support groups and individuals to find a group.

Regulation Activity (5 min)

“That was an energizing game. Let’s go through the Regulation Railroad stops so our brains and bodies are ready for our Talking Circle. Everyone head back to your spot in the circle.” Have students make their way back to their spots in the Talking Circle.

“**Stop 1: ‘What do I notice in my body?’**” Reference the Regulation Railroad visual. Name some of the ways students seem to have energy in their bodies (still moving around, chatting, laughing, etc.).

“**Stop 2: ‘What emotion do I feel?’** Am I feeling happy, sad, excited, or frustrated?” Pause to allow students to reflect.

“**Stop 3: ‘How big is my emotion?’** What number would you give it from one to five?” Pause to allow students to reflect.

“Now, **Stop 4: ‘What will I do to regulate?’** Today we are going to practice regulating with a new strategy called mindfulness. As I read, you will listen and think about your answers silently in your head, just like you do when you read to yourself. As we think about our



EXTENSIONS

Everyday Application

- Notice and name when students invite others to join them.
- Remind students to use the phrase, ‘Come join us!’ when forming small groups.

Read Aloud

- The Lemonade Hurricane: A Story of Mindfulness and Meditation.* Morelli, L., & Morris, J. (Illustrator). (2015). Maine: Tilbury House Publishers.
- Wild Mindfulness.* Larson, L. (2019). Self-published.
- I am Peace: A Book about Mindfulness.* Verde, S., Reynolds, P. (Illustrator). (2019). New York: Abrams Appleseed.
- Leah’s Voice.* Demonia, L., & Turchan, M. (Illustrator). (2012). Houston: Halo Publishing International.
- The Name Jar.* Choi, Y. (2003). New York: Dragonfly Books.
- All Are Welcome.* Penfold, A., & Kaufman, S. (Illustrator). (2018). Manhattan: Knopf Books for Young Readers.
- You, Me and Empathy.* Sanders, J., & Cardoso, S. (Illustrator). (2017). Australia: Educate2Empower Publishing.
- Be You!* Reynolds, P. (Author & Illustrator). (2020). New York: Orchard Books.

Home Connection

- Ask people at home who they would choose to send kind thoughts to.

Academic Integration

- Writing:** Write or draw a thank you card for the people in your life that help you.

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Come Join Us!

answers, we will be sending positive thoughts and kindness out into the world.

“Close your eyes if you feel comfortable, or just find a spot on the floor in front of you to focus on.

“Now, take a few slow, deep breaths. As you do, notice your heart beating and your belly rising and falling with each breath.” Take three audible breaths.

“Next, imagine in your mind someone that you love. The person could be a family member or a friend, or even a grandparent.” Pause.

“We are going to send them kindness and love with our thoughts. As you imagine this person in your mind, repeat after me:

“May you be safe.” Pause.

“May you be healthy.” Pause.

“May you be happy.” Pause.

“Now imagine in your mind a person that you know but are not too close to. Imagine this person is standing in front of you. You are going to send them your kindness and love. As you imagine this person in your mind, repeat after me:

“May you be safe.” Pause.

“May you be healthy.” Pause.

“May you be happy.” Pause.

“Now, imagine someone that you have had a conflict with. Imagine this person is standing in front of you. You are going to send them your kindness and love. As you imagine this person in your mind, repeat after me:

“May you be safe.” Pause.

“May you be healthy.” Pause.

“May you be happy.” Pause.

“Finally, picture yourself standing in front of a mirror. As you imagine looking at yourself in the mirror, repeat after me:

“May you be safe.” Pause.

“May you be healthy.” Pause.

“May you be happy.” Pause.

“You can open your eyes now or look up from your spot on the floor. Thank you all for being so generous by sending thoughts of kindness out to others.”

Talking Circle Prompts

- “How have you been generous lately?”
- “How are you generous at school?”
- “How are you generous at home?”

Mindfulness

- Repeat the Loving Kindness mindfulness at any point in time.

Music

- You've Got a Friend in Me* by Randy Newman
- We're All In This Together* by High School Musical Cast

Creative Expression

- Create pictures of people at school that are helpers to make a mural and invite others to add to the mural.

Transitions

- Once students feel confident with Swim Around Silly, the game can be used as a transition when energy is low.

Closing Talking Circle (15 min)

“All year long, we have been working on building connections with the people around us. Raise your hand if you have made a new friend this year.” Get a show of hands.

“Raise your hand if you invited others to play with you this year.” Get a show of hands.

“Turn to a neighbor and share what you like to do at recess.” Pair share.

“We can always learn new things about each other, and this helps us all feel more connected. We might find that others enjoy the same things we do or maybe they are good at something and we can learn from them.

“We can be generous as we build connections with each other. It is generous when we invite others to play. It is generous when we reach out and make a new friend. It is generous when we listen to others, especially if they are having a hard day.

“Let’s share one way we can be generous to the people around us today. You may share a way you will be generous on the playground, at home, or at school. We all have the power to connect with each other and be generous to help make someone else’s day a little bit better. Who would like to start the share?” Pass the Talking Piece to the volunteer and continue sharing around the circle. Be sure to offer another chance to anyone who passes.

“Thank you all for sharing. If we notice others being generous today or at any time, those are great chances to share an Affirmation 🙌👏🙌 with them.”



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WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE LESSON 3.6

Celebrating Generosity

Time

20 minutes

Preparation

None

Materials

Talking Piece

SEL focus

Relationship Skills, Social Awareness, Self-Awareness

Instructor Overview

This Celebration Lesson revisits how we can be generous with our words and actions. Generosity is a powerful way to feel more connected to the people around us. This practice strengthens our individual resilience and builds healthy communities. The lesson ends with an opportunity for everyone to share the name of a generous person in our lives and an Affirmation, Apology, or Aha.

Talking Circle (20 min)

Invite students to the Talking Circle and welcome them as they arrive. *“In our last Sources of Strength lesson, we talked about how we can strengthen our connections with each other. We learned that one way to build stronger connections with others is by practicing Generosity. Generosity is a great way to let others know that they are important. When we practice Generosity, it helps us feel more connected, healthier, and more resilient too. Resilience means that we use our Strengths to get through hard things in life in healthy ways. Who wants to use their Strengths and be resilient members of our community?”* Get a show of hands.

“As we share today, we will think about someone in our life that is really generous. Generosity is when we do kind things for others on purpose. That might be spending time with another person, baking or cooking food for others, helping out when someone is having a hard day, and so many other kind things. We’ll share the name of a person who is generous. It might be someone who invites you to play or shares their toys, helps you with school work, or some other way they show kindness. When we recognize others who are generous and name them, it is an Affirmation. Who would like to begin our share?” Pass the Talking Piece to the volunteer and continue sharing around the circle. Be sure to offer another chance to anyone who passes. Don’t forget to share also.

“Let’s stand up and go to two different people in the circle, give them a high five and say, ‘Thanks for being my classmate.’ Once you finish, return to your spot in the circle. Ready, GO!” Allow students time to move and connect.

“Now we’ll pass the Talking Piece around the circle again, and this time, each of us will have the opportunity to share an Affirmation, offer a Helpful Apology, or share an Aha. Who would like to begin our share?” Pass the Talking Piece to the volunteer and continue sharing around the circle. Be sure to offer another chance to anyone who passes and share your own celebration.

“Thank you all for sharing your generous and kind words. Your Generosity creates connections to help our community be healthy and Strong.”

REFLECTION



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