



Grade 5 • Ages 10-12

What Influences Us

Being able to recognize who and what influences us, and how, helps us strengthen our personal values, make positive choices and resist negative peer pressure.

Unit Objective

Students will be able to describe how feelings and emotions are portrayed in the media and how media images can impact our understanding of what it means to be kind, identify how media and society can influence mental and emotional health, and explain how families and peers can influence mental and emotional health.

Kindness means being friendly, generous or considerate to ourselves and others through our words, thoughts and actions.



Introducing This Unit To Your Students

For the next few days, we are going to talk about how we might be influenced by the media, our peers and our family, guardians or the people with whom we live. What do you think has the biggest impact on your ideas and feelings?

Allow time for students to respond and discuss, either as a paired share, in small groups or as a class. You can also use this time to introduce the Kindness Concepts (respect, integrity responsibility) and create community definitions for these concepts or share the definitions listed below. Consider using the Kindness Concept Posters for respect, integrity and responsibility as a way to reinforce learning.

These lesson plans were created by The Random Acts of Kindness Foundation. For more information, please visit randomactsofkindness.org

If you have questions or comments, please email us at teacherhelp@randomactsofkindness.org

Kindness Concepts

Consider writing key terms on the board before class to introduce vocabulary and increase understanding.

RESPECT Treating people, places, and things with kindness.

RESPONSIBILITY Being reliable to do the things that are expected or required in your life, home, community and environment.

INTEGRITY Acting in a way you know to be right and kind in all situations.

Unit Lessons

There are four lessons in this unit plus an optional lesson if you have time.

LESSON TITLE	LESSON GOALS	LESSON MATERIALS
Lesson 1: The Greatest Influences	Students will be able to explain how families and peers can influence mental health and emotional well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signs with the following words: Friends/Peers, Parents/Guardian, Brothers and Sisters, Relatives (cousins, aunt/uncles, grandparents, etc), Teachers, Mentor/Other Adult, Media (TV, movies, music), Me; post signs around the room before the activity• RAK Journals Kindness• Kindness Concept Posters: Responsibility, Integrity
Lesson 2: Media Influence	Students will observe how characters are portrayed in the media and whether or not they model respect and integrity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Media and Emotions activity sheet, one for each student or projected onto the board• RAK Journals• How to Eat Fried Worms: http://downloads.randomactsofkindness.org/How_to_Eat_Fried_Worms_Trailer.mp4• Tooth Fairy: http://downloads.randomactsofkindness.org/Tooth_Fairy_Trailer.mp4• Reach: http://www.values.com/inspirational-stories-tv-spots/78-reach• Narnia: http://downloads.randomactsofkindness.org/CHRONICLES_OF_NARNIA_EDMUND_IS_FORGIVEN.mp4• Watsons Go to Birmingham: http://downloads.randomactsofkindness.org/The_Watson_Go_To_Birmingham_52mb.mp4• Charlotte's Web: http://downloads.randomactsofkindness.org/Charlottes_Web_Friendship.mp4• Kindness Concept Posters: Respect and Integrity
Lesson 3: Come Back with Courage Role-Play	Students will explore and practice respectful ways of saying no when they experience peer pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Come back with Courage Role-plays, copied and cut apart before class• Chart paper to write the five comebacks• RAK Journals• Kindness Concept Posters: Respect, Responsibility
Lesson 4: Influencing Others	Students will think about how they can positively influence others and plan a class act of kindness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Materials are determined by how students decide to implement this lesson• RAK Journals• Kindness Concept Posters: Respect, Responsibility, Integrity

Unit Notes

The activities in this lesson focus on a central theme and connect to different academic curriculum areas.

The lessons are intended to be easy to teach and fun to use while helping to develop social and emotional skills.

Lesson activities use a variety of modalities to address different learning styles and build on each other.

Each lesson includes choice of evaluation or reflection questions, which can be written, discussed or used as journal entries. Consider writing these on the board before the lesson begins.

The activities also incorporate key Kindness Concepts, which can be introduced before teaching the lesson or as the concepts are discussed in the lesson. Consider displaying the [Kindness Concept Posters](#) during the unit. See the [RAK Educator Guide](#) and [Building Trust in the Classroom](#) for information about using Kindness Concepts to create a healthy classroom environment and help students develop pro-social behaviors.

Each activity includes tips for how to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of diverse learners.

[The Kindness Tool Kit](#) is another way to meet the needs of diverse learners. See the [RAK Educator Guide](#) for how to create and use this tool kit.

RAK also has developed [Focusing Strategies](#) and [Problem-Solving Strategies](#) to help students better regulate their emotions, think through challenging situations, and build healthy relationships, friendships and community. See the [RAK Educator Guide](#) for more information about incorporating those strategies into the unit.

Establishing kindness as the norm in your classroom positively influences classroom culture. By setting kindness as the expected behavior and having everyone agree to that norm, your students gain responsibility for maintaining an environment that is kind to everyone.

Revisiting the topics or questions raised during discussions regularly will expand student understanding of the concepts. Scripted explanations are provided, but feel free to use language that feels natural for you.

The Common Core, 21st Century, SEL and Colorado P-12 Academic Standards met in this unit are listed at the start of each lesson. A [Learning Standards Key](#) is provided on the website for your reference.

