

Kindness Escape Room: Teamwork

In this lesson, students will learn about inclusiveness through the lens of teamwork. They will also review and demonstrate understanding of past unit concepts around respect and caring through an “escape room” simulation. Teams of four work together to solve four situations and earn a pass “out” of the escape room. The idea is to create a slightly competitive environment where students must work together toward a common goal while simultaneously reviewing key concepts from previous lessons.

Inclusiveness Sub-Concept(s)

Kindness

Lesson Timeframe

30-40 minutes

Required Materials

- Paper for printing the scorecards and situation slips
- Envelopes for situation slips or staples if simply folded. The idea is to keep the situation somewhat concealed until the retriever returns to his or her team
- Stamper or some kind of marker to check off teams’ scorecards
- Could have prizes for the team that escapes first
- Scorecards
- Situation slips to be copied and cut out

Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.



DESIGNATED BY CASEL
AS A RECOMMENDED PROGRAM
FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING.
See last page for details.

Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Recognize how teamwork requires inclusiveness.
- Practice teamwork through a game situation.

Teacher Connection/Self-Care

The skill of working together on a team is one that is utilized throughout our adult lives. Your teaching partner, your grade specific teaching group, your school, and even your district are all run by structured teams that must find common ground to accomplish a shared goal. However, your assigned team doesn’t necessarily correlate with your desired team. The skills you use in your classroom every day can and should be applied to the various teams, committees, and boards you sit on both at school and beyond. Don’t expect to be perfect. We all have our faults. It is easier to look outwards than to personally reflect. Before you start complaining or struggling with your group, ask yourself these three questions: How can I help? How might I be a problem for others? How can I help things go right? We all have strengths and weaknesses. Being open about them can help you in any team situation. Be up front about both what you can offer and where you may struggle!

Tips for Diverse Learners

- Students with anxiety may not respond well to the idea of an “escape room” so adjust the presentation as necessary.
- Because each student will have a specific role on the team, there should be an opportunity for everyone to contribute. If students are self-selecting groups and there are groups that do not have strong readers and writers, they may be at a disadvantage. Adjust requirements as necessary or pre-assign groups to ensure everyone can be in a role that gives them an opportunity to be successful.



Share

3-5 minutes

How many of you have played on a team before?

Invite student response.

Can someone tell me what a team is? What are some qualities that make a good, successful team?

Invite student response.

Do you ever decide, before giving someone a chance, that he or she would not be good on your team? That you don't want to include them? How might excluding - or, not including - others from joining a team hurt the team?



Inspire

5-7 minutes

We are going to dive even further regarding teams. Let's use the example of a baseball team. How many of you have either played baseball or softball or have seen a baseball or softball game?

Let students respond.

On a baseball or softball team, you have nine players out on the field at one time. Are those players all doing the same job?

Correct! They all have different jobs, don't they? And what happens if one of those nine players is missing? Can they play the game successfully? Right - they can't. Teams only work if everyone participates and does his or her assigned job. Even if a team has a really good player, they still need everyone else. A single first baseman cannot win an entire baseball game.

Teams sometimes have members that work individually to get a job done, like a gymnastics team or a golf team; each athlete is important but they don't play together - they work on their own but the points they earn go toward the entire team. They still must each do his or her best to help ensure that everyone succeeds.

Turn to your neighbor and do a think-pair-share about other types of teams (other than sports teams) and what each team member has to do in order for the whole team to succeed.



Empower

20-25 minutes

Have you ever heard of those “escape rooms” where people need to work together and solve puzzles or riddles or problems in order to get out? Well, we are now going into the Kindness Escape Room!

If time permits, you could prepare the room in advance with some escape room signs, suspenseful music, etc. (see ideas here: <https://www.weareteachers.com/build-a-classroom-escape-room-lesson/>)

You are going to work in teams to address some situations about kindness, including concepts that we studied in our Respect and Caring Units. Each person has a special job to do and in order for your team to be successful, each person must do his or her job.

Here are the teams [put students into teams of 4 or allow self-selection if that is best for your class]. On your team, you need a retriever, a reader, a writer, and a reporter. The retriever, on my mark, comes to get the first situation from my desk (they cannot run, though!). The retriever returns to the team and gives the envelope to the reader who reads the situation to the team. The writer writes down the team’s final decision or response on the scorecard and gives it to the reporter. The whole team must agree on the response and sign the card to verify the results. The reporter then walks the score card back to the teacher who will review and either approve or reject the answer.

If approved, the teacher will stamp the score card. The reporter returns to the team, and high-fives the retriever who then goes back for the next situation. The retriever cannot leave his or her seat until the reporter high-fives them. Then the team repeats the same action for the next situation.

As soon as you get all four stamps, you get to “escape”. The goal is to be the first team out!

To keep the room in suspense, continue playing music in the background and/or have a buzzer at the desk that you hit or ring when a team escapes.



Reflect

3-5 minutes

Ask the following questions:

- What was this experience like for your team? Did everyone feel confident in performing their duty?
- How did you assign team members roles?
- Was there ever any conflict on your team?
- What would have happened if one of your team members didn’t fulfill his or her role?



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AS A RECOMMENDED
PROGRAM FOR SOCIAL
AND EMOTIONAL
LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>

Situation 1 Answer

Signed _____

Situation 2 Answer

Signed _____

Situation 3 Answer

Signed _____

Situation 4 Answer

Signed _____

Kindness Escape Room Situations

Ensure there is one of each of the four situations for each team; cut them out and put them in envelopes (or simply fold them in half and staple).

Note for Teachers: With the exception of #4, the aim of these situations isn't to make students simply recall facts or concepts; it is to apply them. Therefore, any answer has the potential to be the right answer. Make a quick judgement call, but if the response does not specifically address the question or is missing an element of kindness, caring, or inclusiveness, ask teams to rethink their response so that it is more specific or addresses a kindness concept in more detail. With #4, the apology should address the four steps in some way. If a step is missing, encourage teams to add it in.

Four Steps to Making an Apology:

1. Realize you did wrong.
2. Sincerely apologize.
3. Explain yourself.
4. Make future plans.

Situation 1

Maddie is a new student in your class. She is from another state and her family just moved here. What are three specific things you and your classmates could do to make her feel welcome?

Situation 2

You heard a rumor about your best friend from a boy in your class named Trey. You talk to Trey and ask him to stop spreading lies about your friend. Trey says he doesn't care what you say and starts making fun of what you are wearing. How could you respond that is assertive yet respectful?

Situation 3

You are feeling stressed. You have a big test on Friday. You have music lessons once a week and theater twice a week, so you don't have a lot of time after school to relax. Your little sister is getting on your nerves, and you are nervous about your upcoming solo at the school music concert. Name three things you can do to help take care of yourself so that you don't feel so anxious and stressed out, and explain how the strategy will help at least one of these specific stressors. (For example: You could ask your teacher for help studying so you aren't nervous about your test. You cannot use this example as one of your self-care strategies!)

Situation 4

You took your mom's phone without asking and accidentally dropped it and cracked the screen. Using the four steps you learned about in the Caring unit, write a sincere apology.