FEBRUARY'S KEY TO CHARACTER

Definition:
Elementary – The desire to help when a need is discovered: caring for others.
Secondary – Consciousness and caring about others’ distress together with a desire to alleviate it.

Related Words:  
- empathy  
- caring  
- concern  
- kindness  
- benevolence  
- esteem  
- support  
- giving  
- consideration  
- sympathetic

Practical Applications of Compassion
- Giving to others who are less fortunate
- Willingness to share another person’s pain or joy
- Realizing that careless or intentional injury to another is unacceptable
- Thinking of another person’s feelings
- Being kind even when others are not
- Including those who are less skillful in group activities
- Treating others as you would like to be treated
- Understanding cultural differences
- Understanding that feelings are natural and healthy - its how we act upon these feelings that can hurt us and others

Hints For Developing Compassion
- By acting for another’s highest good we develop compassion. We are actually benefiting ourselves by caring because our mind is peaceful and our body feels energized.
- Adopt a positive attitude with the task at hand. A positive mental attitude energizes our body for action.
- Follow the “golden rule.” Act in the best interest of the situation in the same way you would ideally want to be treated in a similar circumstance.
- Taking time to develop compassion rewards us with feelings of joy while doing things for others.
- Compassion for ourselves while we become more loving develops our capacity to experience our consciousness ever more fully.

Source: Susan Kramer – “Virtues” – Creations in Consciousness

Let’s Think About it!
What does compassion mean to you? When “American Girl Magazine” asked girls to share what they thought about compassion they said:
“Compassion is putting my friends and neighbors before myself.” Amy, age 8
“Compassion, I think, is what it feels like to walk in someone’s shoes.” Sally, age 11
“It’s like being unselfish and energetic and hopeful, all at the same time.” Zoe, age 10
“Compassion means helping my Mom, even when I don’t feel like it.” Emily, age 7

Source: American Girl Magazine

“How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in life you will have been all of these.”
~George Washington Carver, American Scientist
Parent Connection

KIND WORDS COST LITTLE, BUT ACCOMPLISH MUCH

“Be nice.” Parents send their youngsters off with those two words so casually they may barely think about what they mean. In fact, the words can be relegated to nothing more than a feel-good idea about getting along with relative calm and creating no waves.

However, given the importance they deserve, the words can inspire children to a lifetime of caring enough to not only co-exist with others, but to actively help the less fortunate and improve their community. Of course, there are no guarantees about what grown children will do given any particular parenting approach. However, if you make the effort, you can evoke compassion in your children and increase the likelihood they will be kind and contributing adults.

World events certainly help open the subject for families to discuss. Headlines draw sharp attention to the awful reality of lives without compassion: Columbine; September 11; and sniper shootings in the nation’s capital, for example.

Short of physical violence are the cruel names, the bullying and the one-upmanship some youth face. “We’ve gone from being a compassionate society to being a competitive society,” says East Syracuse psychotherapist Jennifer Cornish Genovese, who hosts the radio programs “Parenting Matters” on WAER-FM 88 Saturday mornings and “Teen Talk” on WWHT-FM 107.9 and 106.9 Sunday mornings. “Competition often works against compassion.”

How do you change that? Start by understanding that compassion is not just feeling sorry for someone or just refraining from hitting your playmate. “It’s more than just a feeling,” says the Reverend James Bresnahan of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Fayetteville, N.Y. “Compassion involves the act.” It entails both the heart that experiences it and the mind and body that bring it about. We can decide to be compassionate.

Although you cannot “teach” compassion like a step-by-step math lesson, you can instill it in your children by making changes in your lifelong daily routine and by regularly stepping outside your ordinary schedule to make a difference for someone else.

The authoritative approach is the best parenting style for raising a compassionate child. The authoritative parent is not too permissive and not too authoritarian. The kids know that the parents are there for them 100%. As an authoritative parent you have clear rules, reasons for the rules, a genuine interest in your child’s needs, and high expectations. You are kind but firm. Remember to do the following in order to build compassion in your family:

- Help children find alternative ways to deal with situations.
- Make your goal for the children to do the right thing because of internal desire to do so not because they fear punishment.
- As children get older talking becomes very important. Teach sensitivity and awareness as you talk about their feelings, your feelings and the feelings of others.
- Regularly involve your children in volunteer activities. Do it with them and show them that helping others is important to you.
- Encourage your children to get involved in school service projects.
- Help your children to realize that all people regardless of their position, race or religion have feelings, wants, needs, and ambitions.

If you instill compassion into your children there is a good chance that they will carry that belief into adulthood and become caring and contributing members of society.

http://www.inspiredparenting.net/home/learn/library/vol2-no5/teachcompassion-html

THE KING’S HIGHWAY

Once a king had a great highway built for the members of his kingdom. After it was completed, but before it was opened to the public, the king decided to have a contest. He invited as many as desired to participate. Their challenge was to see who could travel the highway the best.

On the day of the contest the people came. Some of them had fine chariots; some had fine clothing, fine hairdos, or great food. Some young men came in their track clothes and ran along the highway.

People traveled the highway all day, but each one, when arriving at the end, complained to the king that there was a large pile of rocks and debris left on the road at one spot and this got in their way and hindered their travel.

At the end of the day, a lone traveler crossed the finish line warily and walked over to the king. He was tired and dirty, but he addressed the king with great respect and handed him a bag of gold. He explained, “I stopped along the way to clear a pile of rocks and debris that was blocking the road. This bag of gold was under it all. I want you to return it to its rightful owner.”

The king replied, “You are the rightful owner.”

The traveler replied, “Oh no, this is not mine. I’ve never known such money.”

“Oh yes,” said the king, “you’ve earned this gold, for you won my contest. He who travels the road best is he who makes the road smoother for those who will follow.”

Author Unknown

Discuss the symbolism in the story:

- Sticks and stones might represent problems that we all face in life.
- The traveler might represent compassion shown by moving the rocks and sticks. Everyone else let the problem hinder them and just complained; the traveler did something about it.
- The gold might represent the rewards for living a life of honesty and having compassion for others.

Valentine’s Day Compassion Week – School-Wide Project

Have a Valentine’s Day Compassion Week where students or staff members nominate others for showing compassion or kindness in a special way. A ballot box can be placed in the main office and/or cafeteria and a drawing for prizes made at the end of the week. The drawing could be random or a tally of those with the most nominations. Winners could be announced over the loudspeaker and then sent to the office to collect their prizes or interviewed and given the prizes on the school news show. Some sample entries from the Space Center Intermediate School in Houston Texas said:

“She helped me pick up my stuff when it fell in the hall.”
“I am a new student from China. She helps me with my English. She is a good friend.”
“She smiles at me in the hallway.”
“He is nice to people and sticks up for people.”
“He leaves his friends to sit with students who are alone at lunch.”
Teacher's Corner plus Activities

I. Select a recent news story that includes a tragedy and a compassionate response. Discuss how tragedies often bring out the best in people and why they think that it is or isn’t so. (Appropriate for any grade level)

II. Make a list of the people that students think care about them. How do these people demonstrate caring? Ask students to put their own names on the top of a sheet of paper, and then rotate the papers so that every one has an opportunity to say something positive about each person. (Appropriate for any grade level)

III. Practice finding the good in other people by finding the good in even the worst characters in a story (example “The Wizard of OZ”, the witch; or even a television show that portrays a less desirable character) and ask students how the “undesirable traits” helped to bring out the best in the hero of the story. Teach students active listening skills, body language, rephrasing, and tuning-in to feelings. Pair up students and ask them to interview each other one at a time. These interviews can be used to introduce students to the rest of the class, or they can play the “New Friend Game.” To play have students sit in two rows opposite their partners and ask each other questions like, “What type of music would they have at home?” Give the teams points for matching answers. (Appropriate for any grade level)

IV. Discuss and give examples of whether or not these old adages are true, “To have a friend you must be a friend” or the old adage “Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me.” (Appropriate for any grade level)

V. Each day choose a different person that students are likely to interact with such as a friend, parent, sibling, and teacher. Brainstorm ways to show caring to each of these persons. Have students do one idea for homework. (Appropriate for any grade level)

Lesson Plan(s)

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Civil-Rights Leader
1929-1968

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” –Martin Luther King, Jr.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born on January 15, 1929 at his family home in Atlanta, Georgia. King was an eloquent Baptist minister and leader of the civil-rights movement in America from the Mid-1950s until his death by assassination in 1968. King promoted non-violent means to achieve civil-rights reform and was awarded the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

King’s grandfather was a Baptist preacher. His father was pastor of Atlanta’s Ebenezer Baptist Church. King earned his own Bachelor of Divinity degree from Crozier Theological Seminary in 1951 and earned his Doctor of Philosophy from Boston University in 1955.

While at seminary King became acquainted with Mohandas Gandhi’s philosophy of nonviolent social protest. On a trip to India in 1959 King met with followers of Gandhi. During these discussions he became more convinced than ever that nonviolent resistance was the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.

As the pastor of a Baptist church in Montgomery, Alabama, King lead a Black bus boycott. He and ninety others were arrested and indicted under the provisions of a law making it illegal to conspire to obstruct the operation of a business. King and several others were found guilty, but appealed their case. As the bus boycott dragged on, King was gaining a national reputation. The ultimate success of the Montgomery bus boycott made King a national hero.

Dr. King’s 1963 “Letter from Birmingham Jail” inspired a growing national civil rights movement. In Birmingham, the goal was to completely end the system of segregation in every aspect of public life (stores, no separate bathrooms and drinking fountains, etc.) and in job discrimination. Also in 1963, King led a massive march on Washington DC where he delivered his now famous, “I Have A Dream” speech. King’s tactics of active nonviolence (sit-ins, protest marches) had put civil-rights squarely on the national agenda.

On April 4, 1968, King was shot by James Earl Ray while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. He was only 39 at the time of his death. Dr. King was turning his attention to a nationwide campaign to help the poor at the time of his assassination. He had never wavered in his insistence that nonviolence must remain the central tactic of the civil-rights movement, or in his faith that everyone in America would some day attain equal justice.

Martin Luther King Jr.: Fact or Opinion?

Directions: Read each statement below. Decide whether each statement tells a fact or an opinion about Martin Luther King, Jr. Write F on the line before each statement that tells a fact. Write O on the line before each statement that tells an opinion.

1. Martin Luther King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929.
2. Dr. King became a preacher because his father and grandfather were preachers.
3. Dr. King was one of the smartest students in his class at Boston University.
4. In 1959, Dr. King traveled to India to meet followers of Mohandas Gandhi.
5. Dr. King believed Gandhi’s ideas could help black people in the United States.
6. The Montgomery bus boycott was the most important event in Dr. King’s life.
7. Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech was the best speech he ever gave.
8. Martin Luther King Jr. received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.
9. James Earl Ray should have been sentenced to die for killing King.
10. Nobody had more impact on the civil rights movement than Dr. King did.

Answers: FOOFFOOFOO
WRITE YOUR OWN “I HAVE A DREAM” SPEECH

Students use a fill-in-the-blanks work sheet to write speeches that imitate the form and content of Dr. King’s famous “I Have a Dream” speech.

Subjects: Language Arts, Social Studies
Grade Levels: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Objectives: Students will:
- Listen to King’s famous “I Have a Dream” speech; and,
- Use a fill-in-the-blanks worksheet to express their dreams for the world in a format similar to King’s speech

Key words: dream, Martin Luther King, speech

Materials Needed:
- Recording of Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream” speech: History Channel Speeches (scroll down to Aug. 28, 1963); King Speech Audio: MLK Audio Clip
- “I Have a Dream Too!” work sheet

1. Explain to students that they are going to learn about Martin Luther King, Jr.’s dream of the future and think about their own dreams.
2. Play a recorded version of Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech so students can get a sense of King’s delivery and of the excitement the speech generated.
3. Discuss with students King’s dream for the country, and ask why people might consider the speech great. Ask students to think about their own dreams for the future.
4. Have students complete the ThinkQuest “I Have a Dream Too!” work sheet.

Assessment: Students present their speeches to their classmates. Ask each student to privately grade his or her peers’ speeches with a rating of 3 (good work), 4 (very good job), or 5 (superb effort). Average the peer scores to come up with each student’s final grade.

Directions: Create your own “I Have a Dream Too!” Speech by filling in the blanks “I Have a Dream Too!”

I have a dream that one day this nation will
I have a dream that one day
I have a dream that
I have a dream today.
I have a dream that one day
I have a dream today.
I have a dream that one day
This is my hope and faith. With this faith we will be able to
This will be the day when

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing the words of the old Negro spiritual, “Free at last! Free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!”

Activities:
1. Introduce the activity on Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. by showing a picture of him on a poster or in a book. Ask the students if they recognize Martin Luther King Jr. Ask the student what they already know about Martin Luther King Jr. List their responses on a chart. Ask them if they know why we celebrate Dr. King’s birthday. (KWL notes would be a good idea. Fold a sheet of paper into three columns. In column one have students write what they know about Martin Luther King, in the second column what they would like to find out, and in the third column what they learned after all of the activities.)

2. Explain that Martin Luther King Jr. was famous because he helped our country change some very unfair laws. Discuss the meaning of a law and that a law is like a rule. Discuss fair rules and unfair rules. Use examples of rules in the classroom. Ask the children if the rules are the same for everyone in the class. Are they fair to everyone? Then give some examples of rules that would be unfair to some people in class (all children wearing red can play anywhere they want, but children wearing blue would only be allowed to play with the certain toys, for example).

3. Discuss the fact that white children and African-American children could not even play together. How do you think African-American people felt about these unfair rules? How would you have felt if you were not allowed to play with a friend because of the way he/she looks (color of their skin, how thin or fat, country they came from, etc.)?

4. Discuss with the students the fact that Martin Luther King Jr. believed that people should not fight with each other and that there were peaceful ways of solving problems. He believed that the unfair laws needed to be changed but not by fighting. He tried to help others change these laws in peaceful ways. Ask the students what is meant by solving problems peacefully. Try to lead students to examples of appropriate problem solving in the classroom. For example, using words when you are upset and angry rather than hitting someone.

5. Introduce the idea that Martin Luther King Jr. liked to help people and was a good leader. He taught people how to change laws peacefully. Discuss how the bus boycott helped to change the unfair bus law. Explain that if no one rode the bus then, the bus company could not make money. Ask the students what they would do if they were the owners of a bus company.

6. Make a large outline drawing of a bus on a large sheet of sturdy paper. Draw big windows on the bus. Have students look through magazines and cut out pictures of people of all kinds sitting together. Put the title “We All Sit Together” on the poster. (This is an excellent bulletin board idea.)

7. Discuss with the children what Martin Luther King Jr. meant by his “dream.” Help students understand the difference between a dream while sleeping and Dr. King’s dream which was more of a wish or a hope. Explain that Martin Luther King Jr.’s dream or wish was to have people live together. Ask the students to draw pictures of some wish or dream for making our world a better place. Have each child verbally finish the sentence “I have a dream that . . . .” Write each child’s finished sentence on the picture. Compile the pictures into a class book entitled “I Have A Dream . . . .” Share this book during story time.
A hunter once dug a pit to catch and trap wild elephants. One day, a man who was being chased by a lion fell into the pit, and then the lion followed a second later. Before they had time to pick themselves up, down came a mouse, closely followed by a snake who had been chasing it, and he, in turn, was followed by a falcon who had been trying to catch him.

So there they were—five of them—caught in the elephant pit and unable to get out. Each as he picked himself up tried to get away as far as possible from the others, for none knew what harm might come to him.

The man thought, "I must kill the lion or he will eat me."

The lion thought, "I must eat the man or he will kill me."

The falcon thought, "I must kill the snake or it may bite me."

The mouse thought, "Oh! how I wish I could get away from all these big creatures!"

Thus they all sat silent, each one afraid to move lest some one or another pounce upon him and kill him.

In time the lion spoke: "Oh, honored ones," he said, "we are all comrades in misfortune. Let us promise not to hurt each other. Let each abide where he now is, while we plan a way to get out of this pit."

"Agreed!" cried all the others in haste, and especially pleased was the mouse.

Thus they all sat apart trying to think of a plan to escape, when the elephant hunter came to the pit.

"Why, what is all this?" the hunter cried, looking down.

"Oh, hunter, good hunter, kind hunter, please help us out!" cried the animals. "You see that we are not elephants."

"No, no, good hunter, I am not an elephant, I am not an elephant," squealed the mouse.

The hunter laughed. "No, you don't look much like an elephant, my little friend," he said. "I think I must help you all to escape."

The first animal that the hunter drew up was the man. "Oh, hunter," said the lion, "I and the other animals will prove grateful to you and will help you for your kindness to us, so rescue them. But leave the man in the pit, for I warn you he will forget your kindness and do you harm."

The hunter, however, would not listen to the lion's advice, and rescued everyone.

A short time after this, the hunter fell ill of a great fever. He could not go into the woods to hunt for game, and he and his wife would have died but for the kindness of the lion. Every day the lion brought fresh meat and left it at the hunter's door.

One day while flying through the forest, the falcon saw something bright and glistening lying on the ground. He swooped down and found some beautiful gems. He carried the gems to the hunter's house and dropped them in his lap. Thus he, too, tried to repay the hunter for saving his life.

Now the gems found by the falcon belonged to the queen. She had lost them one day while passing through the woods. As she did not miss them until the next day, she thought they must have been stolen during the night, and told the king so.

The king at once sent out a man to find the gems, and the man he sent out was the very man who had fallen into the elephant pit and had been rescued by the hunter. In his search he came to the home of the sick hunter.

"Have you seen anything of such and such gems?" asked the man.

"Yes," answered the hunter, and brought them and spread them on the table.

"Where did you get these?" asked the man.

"The falcon whom I rescued from the pit brought them to me," said the hunter.

Now when the man looked on the gems, he craved them, and he said to the hunter, "These gems belong to the queen. She thinks someone has stolen them. Unless I tell, nobody will ever know where they are. So, my friend, let us divide them. You keep half, and give half to me. Thus shall we both gain wealth and no one will be the wiser."

"What!" cried the hunter. "Do you take me for a thief? No! No, I say! The gems shall be returned to our good queen."

"Then, my honest fellow," sneered the man, "you shall go to the palace as my prisoner."

He clapped his hands, and two soldiers rushed in. "Bind him and carry him to the palace as my prisoner." He slapped his hands, and two soldiers rushed in. "Bind him and carry him to the palace as my prisoner."

The poor hunter, still weak from fever and illness, was carried bound to the palace. The king, believing the man's false story, would have died but for the kindness of the lion. Every day the lion brought fresh meat and left it at the hunter's door.

The poor man was now in a pitiable state.

"Alas!" he said, "the lion spoke the truth. Because of the man that I rescued from my elephant pit I am now in this loathsome dungeon with no one to pity me or to deliver me."

"Say not so, good friend," said the mouse, coming out of a corner. "I pity you, and it may be I who can deliver you. Keep up your courage. I will go now to find help."

The mouse ran off and soon returned with the snake. "Now I am glad," said the snake, "to have a chance to show my gratitude. Here is a little box of cream. Hide it in your chest. Today when the king walks in the garden, I will sting him on the heel. The cream in that little box alone can save his life. I urge you to use it."

True to his word, the snake bit the king as he walked in the garden.

"He will die! He will die!" wailed all the people. "None of our doctors know a cure for the bite of that snake."

As the queen sat weeping by the king's side, the mouse drew near and spoke to her. "O queen, there is one who can cure the king—the hunter who lies in the lowest dungeon. Send for him quickly, lest it be too late."

Hastily the queen gave the order, and the hunter was brought to the king's side. Taking the box of cream from his chest, he put some on the wound. At once the swelling went down, the pain disappeared, and the king was well again.

"What reward shall I give you?" said the king. "Ask what you will, my deliverer."

"O king," replied the hunter, "I ask only of you one great favor, that you listen to my story."

He then told the king the whole story. When he had ended, the king said, "The lion was right. Would that you had left the ungrateful man in the pit. Attention soldiers; bring him to me and I will see that he is fitly punished."

But though the soldiers searched everywhere for the man, they could not find him.

"I am glad he has escaped," said the hunter, "for I like not to see anybody suffer."

"Good," said the king, "it is noble thus to forgive an enemy. And now, my friend, I have need of a brave man like you in my palace. You shall live here as my chief hunter."

Thus, through the gratitude of the beasts, the hunter rose to high position and honor in the court of his king.

Discussion questions:
1. Why did the hunter rescue the man after the lion warned him that the man would betray him?
2. Who showed compassion to others?
3. Is it important to return favors that are given to us?
Androcles and the Lion
(Greece)

This story takes place in Rome where a Greek slave named Androcles escaped from his master and fled into the forest. There he wandered for a long time until he was weary and well nigh spent with hunger and despair. Just then he heard a lion near him moaning and groaning and at times roaring terribly. Tired as he was Androcles rose up and rushed away, as he thought, from the lion; but as he made his way though the bushes, he stumbled over the root of a tree and fell down lamed. When he tried to get up, there he saw the lion coming towards him, limping on three feet and holding his forepaw in front of him. Poor Androcles was in despair; he had not strength to rise and run away, and there was the lion coming upon him. However, when the great beast came up to him instead of attacking him it kept on moaning and groaning and looking at Androcles, who saw that the lion was holding out his right paw, which was covered with blood and much swollen. Looking more closely at it Androcles saw a great big thorn pressed into the paw, which was the cause of all the lion’s trouble. Plucking up courage he seized hold of the thorn and drew it out of the lion’s paw, who roared with pain when the thorn came out, but soon after found such relief from it that he fawned upon Androcles and showed, in every way that he knew to whom he owed the relief. Instead of eating him up he brought him a young deer that he had slain, and Androcles managed to make a meal from it. For some time the lion continued to bring the game he had killed to Androcles who became quite fond of the huge beast.

One day a number of soldiers came marching through the forest and found Androcles. As he could not explain what he was doing, they took him prisoner and brought him back to the town from which he had fled. Here his master soon found him and brought him before the authorities. Soon Androcles was condemned to death for fleeing from his master. Now it used to be the custom to throw murderers and other criminals to the lions in a huge circus, so that while the criminals were punished the public could enjoy the spectacle of combat between them and the wild beasts.

So Androcles was condemned to be thrown to the lions, and on the appointed day he was led forth into the Arena and left there alone with only a spear to protect him from the lion. The Emperor was in the royal box that day and gave the signal for the lion to come out and attack Androcles. When it came out of its cage and got near Androcles, what do you think it did? Instead of jumping upon him it fawned upon him and stroked him with its paw and made no attempt to do him any harm.

It was, of course, the lion which Androcles had met in the forest. The Emperor, surprised at seeing such strange behavior in so cruel a beast, summoned Androcles to him and asked him how it happened that this particular lion had lost all its cruelty of disposition. So Androcles told the Emperor all that had happened to him and how the lion was showing its gratitude for his having relieved it of the thorn. The Emperor immediately pardoned Androcles and ordered his master to set him free, while the lion was taken back into the forest and let loose to enjoy liberty once more.

For Discussion: Introduce the term “empathy.”
1. Why do you think Androcles helped the lion?
2. Can a person feel the emotions that someone else is feeling?
3. If you are empathetic with a person, how does that make the person feel?
4. With what person do you often empathize?

This version is told by Joseph Jacobs, from European Folk and Fairy Tales (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, © 1916), pp. 107-109. The story is credited to Aesops, a Greek slave who lived from about 620 to 580 BC. The Aesops tale can also be found in Aesop’s Fables, translated by V. S. Vernon Jones (London: W. Heinemann, 1912), pp. 31-32

The Color Red

We stared hungrily at the familiar green and yellow boxes stacked tall on Miss Tucker’s desk that early fall day in 1969. “Class, I have to run to the principal’s office,” said my beloved second grade teacher whose blond hair flipped up at the ends. “Read quietly until I get back. Then I’ll pass out your new crayons, O.K.?”

As the clicking of Miss Tucker’s high-heels receded down the hallway, anticipation overcame an ordinarily shy girl in hand-me-downs named Carolyn. She slipped to the front and unfolded a cardboard cover to run her stubby fingers over the smoothly-shaved crayons. Then she pulled out a red one and accidentally snapped it in two. With fear on her face Carolyn hurried back to her seat. “You’re gonna get in trouble!” jeered Buddy, the class loudmouth, in his rhythmic whine.

When Miss Tucker reappeared, Buddy blurted, “Carolyn opened the crayons and broke one!” Unaccustomed to notoriety, the nervous little girl could no longer suppress guilty tears. Miss Tucker went to Carolyn and stroked her hair and offered encouragement until she nodded reluctantly with one last sniffle.

After a sharp reprimand to Buddy for his insensitivity, Miss Tucker addressed the class with a message I have never forgotten: “There are many more crayons in the world, but only one Carolyn.”

Susan L. Comer – Winston-Salem Davidson EMC
Suggested Reading List

Books about Compassion:

Grades K-2:
- Angel for Solomon Singer, by Cynthia Rylant
- Chicken Sundays, by Patricia Polacco
- Redheaded Robbie’s Christmas Story, by Bill Luttrell
- The Braids Girl Story, by Lisa McCourt
- Wings by Christopher Myers

Grades 3-5:
- All Summer in a Day, by Ray Bradbury
- Best Train Set Ever, by Pat Hutchins
- Bright April, by Marguerite DeAngeli
- Charlotte’s Web, by E.B. White
- Chester’s Way, by Kevin Henkes
- Children’s Book of Virtues, by Wm. Bennett
- Coming to America, by Betsy Maestro
- Corduroy, by Don Freeman
- Crow Boy, by Taro Yashima
- Foundling Fox, by I. Korschanow
- Frog and the Stranger, by Max Velthuijs
- Gladys Told Me to Meet Her Here, by M. Sharmat
- Ugly Duckling, by Andersen

Grades 6-12:
- Christy, by Catherine Marshall
- Life Is Not Fair, by G. Badger
- Little Little, by M. Kerr
- When Hitler Stole Pink Rabbit, by J. Kerr
- Battle Horse, by H. Kullman
- Look Through My Window, by J. Little
- Edgar Allen, by J. Neufeld
- Animal Family, by R. Jarrell
- Berries Goodman, by E. Neville
- Don’t Hurt Laurie!, by W. Roberts
- Journey Home, by Y. Uchida
- Journey to Topaz, by Y. Uchida
- Madeline & the Great (Old) Escape Artist, by R. Jones
- Look Through My Window, by J. Little

FCAT Connections

Pair a story printed in the Keys to Character and one of the following activities to develop FCAT skills.

1. Use a printed copy of the story to identify all the action words, or descriptive words.
2. Create role-play cards as a writing assignment in groups and act out the play.
3. Take two-column notes as the story is read aloud (make sure each student has a printed copy).
4. Write a one-paragraph (or more) essay and create a new ending to one of the stories.
5. Create a comic strip from one of the character’s points of view. Ideas might include:
   - The traveler in the “King’s Highway”
   - Carolyn, Buddy, or Mrs. Tucker in “The Color Red”
   - The lion in “Androcles and the Lion”
   - The man, falcon, mouse, hunter, or lion in “From the Elephant Pit”

Bulletin Board Ideas:

Center a mirror in the middle of the Bulletin Board with the title: “Behavior is a Mirror In Which You Show Your Image”. Surround the mirror with daises and in the center of each put one of the following messages:

Be Hospitable  Be Generous  Have Reverence
Be Cordial  Show Gratefulness  Be Welcoming
Be Kind  Be a Lady  Be a Gentleman
Be Mannerly  Show Appreciation  Be Responsible
Be Trustworthy  Respect Authority

Source: Julie Jungclaus

Create a Valentine’s Day board with the pictures of each person in the class framed by a pink cupcake paper. In the center of the board place the title, “Our Caring Hearts.” Scatter small hearts around the board.

Use a picture of a giraffe with the header, “Stick Your Head Out: Be Compassionate.”

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS BENCHMARKS:

Prek-2 grade:
- HE.A.1.1 Student comprehends concepts related to health promotion & prevention.
- HE.B.1.1 Student knows health-enhancing behaviors & how to reduce health risks.
- HE.B.3.1 Student knows communication skills that enhance health.

Grades 3-5:
- HE.A.1.2 Student comprehends concepts related to health promotion & disease prevention.
- HE.B.1.2 Student knows health-enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.
- HE.B.3.2 Student knows how to use effective interpersonal communication skills that enhance health.

Grades 6-8:
- HE.A.1.3 Student comprehends concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention.
- HE.A.2.3 Student knows how to access valid health information.
- HE.B.1.3 Student knows health-enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.
- HE.B.3.3 Student knows how to use effective interpersonal communication skills that enhance health.
- HE.C.2.3 Student knows how to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Grades 9-12:
- HE.A.1.4 Student comprehends concepts related to health promotion & disease prevention.
- HE.A.2.4 Student knows how to access valid health information and health-promoting products & services.
- HE.B.1.4 Student knows health-enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.
- HE.B.3.4 Student knows how to use effective interpersonal communication skills that enhance health.
### Compassion Quotes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Week 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, liberty; in all things, charity.”</td>
<td>“One joy scatters a hundred griefs.”</td>
<td>“Love is the stepping stone to new beginnings.”</td>
<td>“Small deeds done are better than great deeds planned.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>~Anne Baxter</td>
<td>~Chinese Proverb</td>
<td>~Thomas Kinkade</td>
<td>~Peter Marshall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel the capacity to care is the thing which gives life its deepest significance.”</td>
<td>“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”</td>
<td>“A good heart is better than all the heads in the world.”</td>
<td>“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and you help them to become what they are capable of being.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~Pablo Casals</td>
<td>~Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.</td>
<td>~Edward Bulwer-Lytton</td>
<td>~Johann Wolfgang von Goethe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.”</td>
<td>“Use your special abilities to help other people, make yourself necessary to somebody, and live to make the world less difficult for each other.”</td>
<td>“Never apologize for showing feelings. When you do so, you apologize for the truth.”</td>
<td>“Never look down on anybody unless you’re helping them up.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>~Aesop</td>
<td>~George Elliott</td>
<td>~Benjamin Disraeli</td>
<td>~The Reverend Jesse Jackson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tenderness and kindness are not signs of weakness and despair but manifestations of strength and resolution.”</td>
<td>“If you think about what you ought to do for other people, your character will take care of itself.”</td>
<td>“The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only object of good government.”</td>
<td>“If there is any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~Kahlil Gibran</td>
<td>~Woodrow Wilson</td>
<td>~Thomas Jefferson</td>
<td>~William Penn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Life’s most urgent question is, what are you doing for others?”</td>
<td>“We can do no great things, only small things with great love.”</td>
<td>“People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”</td>
<td>“Kindness is more than deeds. It is an attitude, an expression, a look, a touch. It is anything that lifts another person.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~Martin Luther King, Jr.</td>
<td>~Mother Theresa</td>
<td>~Bonnie Jean Wasmun</td>
<td>~C. Neil Strait</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Poet’s Corner**

**Smile**

She smiled at a sorrowful stranger. The smile seemed to make him feel better. He remembered past kindnesses of a friend and wrote him a thank-you letter. The friend was so pleased with the thank-you that he left a large tip after lunch. The waitress, surprised by the size of the tip, bet the whole thing on a hunch.

The next day she picked up her winnings, and gave part to a man on the street. The man on the street was grateful; for two days he’d had nothing to eat. After he finished his dinner, he left for his small dingy room. (He didn’t know at that moment that he might be facing his doom.) On the way he picked up a shivering puppy and took him home to get warm. The puppy was so grateful to be in out of the storm. That night the house caught on fire. The puppy barked the alarm. He barked ‘til he woke the whole household and saved everybody from harm. One of the boys that he rescued grew up to be President. All this because of a simple smile that hadn’t cost a cent.

*By Barbara Hauck, age 13*

*Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul*

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**Websites on Compassion**

- **Animal Stories, love, compassion, hearts, souls, spirits, funny, happy, sad, relationships, people, animals, animal....stories about human and non-human animal relationships, happy, sad, funny....Having Compassion for a Catfish. Her First Taste of Freedom. Hogan Adopts Bella...**
  - [www.all-creatures.org/animal.html](http://www.all-creatures.org/animal.html)

- **Education World: School Issues: Telecollaborative Project Develops Compassion, Global Awareness....a class in Israel opened students’ eyes, built global awareness and compassion....Best Websites. Marketing Questions. Management Questions.**
  - [www.educationworld.com/a_issues/issues332.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_issues/issues332.shtml)

- **We Remember Anne Frank | Scholastic.com**
  - Students meet two heroic women whose courage enabled them to risk everything to help Anne Frank....K-3 | World War II, Compassion and Honesty, Courage and...[
  - [content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=7647](http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=7647)

- **Websites for Holocaust Education**
  - ...to build a world based on compassion, mutual respect, and social justice...A lesson plan for grades 10-12 in which “students examine a Holocaust related...**
  - [www.cumbavac.org/Holocaust.htm](http://www.cumbavac.org/Holocaust.htm)

- **Education World – Curriculum: Teaching Citizenship’s Five Themes**
  - ...students’ understanding of the five citizenship themes—honesty, compassion, Best Websites. Marketing Questions. Management Questions.**
  - [www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr008.shtml](http://www.educationworld.com/a_curr/curr008.shtml)