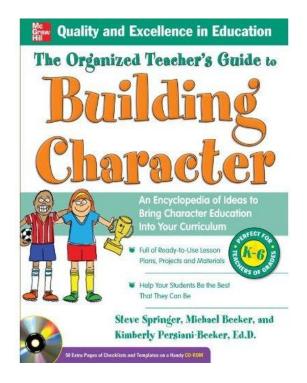
### **Kindness Unit with Graphic Organizers**

**Excerpted** from

<u>The Organized Teacher's Guide to</u> <u>Building Character</u>

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The Organized Teacher series includes the following books, all available through <u>Amazon.com</u>:

- The Organized Teacher
- <u>The Creative Teacher</u>
- <u>The Festive Teacher</u>
- <u>Building Character</u>
- <u>The Master Teacher</u>
- Your First Year of Teaching

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# Third Month of School

Teaching about kindness and caring is important in shaping a positive attitude in young people. Children need to learn to be kind to others so that they can establish and maintain good relationships. It will help them be generous, fair, and loving. They are able to be more conscious of their own actions, because they know what it feels like when others are



kind to them. Teaching young people to be kind and caring crosses grade levels: Whether the students are 5-year-olds or 14-year-olds, it is important for them to learn to show people kindness and to let them know that they are cared about.

#### List of Activities and/or Lesson Ideas



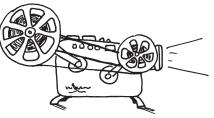
- Students use the Venn Diagram Organizer to write an essay that compares circumstances described in the two stories, concluding with a paragraph illustrating that every person should always be treated with kindness.
- Students create a storyboard illustrating how the characters in *The Paper Crane* felt and acted.
- Students write kind notes to one another.
- Students write a sentence describing a random act of kindness for one letter of the alphabet.
- Students generate a list of acts of kindness and share their list with others.
- Students write a 5-paragraph essay about *The Story of Three Whales* by Giles Whittell, focusing on how kindness plays a role in the treatment of animals.
- Students skim newspapers to identify stories demonstrating kindness and write a summary of their findings.
- Students write a statement about being kind to animals and illustrate it in a poster.
- Students brainstorm ideas for service-learning projects that they could perform for the school or the larger community.
- GLUE GLUE
- Students create an "Acts of Kindness" wall after reading and discussing *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein.
- Students write one nice thing about every student in the class on a sheet listing each student's name.
- Students discuss and carry out a service-learning project, where they collect donations to help a local charity.
- Students create a class book of kindness stories after researching stories about kindness on the Internet.
- Students write a movie review, identifying acts of kindness.
- Students create a kindness certificate for a classmate.

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- Students glue magazine pictures depicting kindness onto a heart-shaped sheet of poster board.
- Students list kind acts they do for their friends.
- Each student writes about an individual who has been kind to him or her.

#### **Recommended Movies/Videos/Television Programs**

- *Beauty and the Beast.* (2002). Belle is a young girl whose father inadvertently offends the Beast (a prince whose heart is too hard to love anyone besides himself). After her father is imprisoned in the Beast's gloomy mansion, Belle takes her father's place and teaches the Beast to love. (G, Grades K–8)
- *Charlotte's Web.* (2006). Fern Arable is a young girl growing up on her family's farm. Wilbur, a runt pig, becomes Fern's pet, but when he grows larger, he's put in the care of a farmer down the road, where he has a limited life expectancy. Charlotte, a friendly spider, hatches a plan to make Wilbur seem special enough to save by weaving messages about the "terrific" pig into her web, and she soon

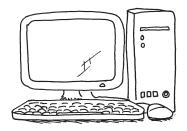


messages about the "terrific" pig into her web, and she soon persuades her barnyard friends to join in her plan. (G, Grades K–8)

- *Pay it Forward*. (2000). A seventh-grade class assignment to put into action an idea that could change the world turns into something much bigger. Trevor comes up with a plan to do good deeds for three people, who as payment must each do good deeds for three other people. These nine people also must pay it forward, and it keeps going. (PG-13, Grades 4–8)
- *Stuart Little*. (1999). Mr. and Mrs. Little set out to adopt a baby brother for their son, but instead they return home with a mouse, who is not a hit at home. The house cat, Snowball, is even nastier than the boy, especially after Mr. Little admonishes, "We do not eat family members." Shamed by his status as a cat with a mouse master, Snowball goes on the offensive. (PG, Grades K–8)

#### Resources

- Inspiring quotes, good news, and daily actions—www.dailygood .org
- Teaching Kindness in Schools—parenting.ivillage.com/gs /gsbehavior/0,,80w0,00.html
- *The Creative Teacher*. Steve Springer, Brandy Alexander, and Kimberly Persiani-Becker. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006. (ISBN 9780071472807)



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#### Annotated Bibliography

• Bang, Molly. *The Paper Crane*. 1987. (ISBN 9780688073336) A restaurant owner and his son lose their customers when their street is turned into a highway. One night a poor man comes to their restaurant and they serve him a meal. Before he leaves, the man gives them a paper crane, which becomes a living, dancing bird when they clap their hands. The crane brings crowds and prosperity to the restaurant. (Grades 2–8)



- Glavich, Mary Kathleen. Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, Missionary of Charity. 2003. (ISBN 9780819811608)
   Children will read about the many kind contributions Mother Teresa made during her lifetime. (Grades 4–8)
- Grimm, Jacob. *The Elves and the Shoemaker*. 2003. (ISBN 9780811834773)
   A poor shoemaker and his wife become rich when elves make beautiful shoes for them to sell. They return the favor by making clothes for the elves in a classic fairy tale about kindness and giving. (Grades 2–5)
- Polacco, Patricia. *Chicken Sunday.* 1998. (ISBN 9780698116153) A young Russian-American girl and her African-American brothers buy their grandma a beautiful Easter hat to thank Miss Eula for her wonderful Sunday chicken dinners. They sell decorated eggs to raise the money to buy her gift. (Grades K–6)

• Silverstein, Shel. *The Giving Tree*. 1986. (ISBN 9780060256654) As a boy grows from childhood to adulthood, the tree selflessly gives her resources to him throughout the many phases of his life. This bittersweet story reminds us about the gift of giving and the capacity to love. (Grades K–8)

• Snihura, Ulana and Leanne Franson. *I Miss Franklin P. Shuckles*. 1998. (ISBN 97815500375176)

Molly begins an unlikely friendship with the boy next door. She finds out how easy it is to lose a friendship if you are not kind and how hard it is to get it back even if you change your ways. (Grades 2–4)

- Wallace, Nancy. *The Kindness Quilt*. 2006. (ISBN 9780761453130) Minna does a lot of thinking about her project to do something kind, make a picture about what she did, and share it with her classmates. She finally comes up with an idea that can be shared with the whole school. (Grades 2–6)
- Whittell, Giles. *The Story of Three Whales*. 1989. (ISBN 9780744513677)
   In 1988, three gray whales waited too long to begin their southern migration, and they were trapped in the Arctic ice. Eventually they were saved through the efforts of the people who worked to free them. (Grades 3–8)

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## Teaching Tools Definitions

What does it mean to be "kind" or "caring"? Being kind or caring means helping others unconditionally, having empathy

for others, and showing

compassion to others.



#### **Kindness and Caring Quotations**

- "How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a weary world." (William Shakespeare)
- "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." (Winston Churchill)
- "From caring comes courage." (Lao Tzu)
- "Never look down on anybody unless you're helping him up." (Jesse Jackson)
- "If you want others to be happy, practice compassion. If you want to be happy, practice compassion." (The Dalai Lama)

### **Kindness and Caring Questions**

- How do you respond when people you know show acts of caring about you? Are you comfortable with this? Does it help you to be caring in return?
- Do you think we live in a caring society? Why or why not? How can we make this a more caring place to live?
- When someone goes out of their way to be unkind, how does that affect people?
- Do you think that you learn to be a kind and caring person or do you think you are born that way?
- What do you think makes us want to be kind to others? What motivates us to do so?







#### **Kindness Vocabulary**

Synonyms	Antonyms
affection	animosity
compassion	cruel
courtesy	harsh
decency	hatred
generosity	hurtful
goodness	ill will
sympathy	inconsiderate
thoughtfulness	mean

#### **Caring Vocabulary**

#### Synonyms

concern considerate look after protect provide for respect treasure watch over Antonyms disregard ignore inconsiderate insensitive neglect not care



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# **Lesson Ideas**

#### **Comparing and Contrasting Folktales**

ACTIVITY TYPE	Writing
RESOURCES	The Paper Crane by Molly Bang
	The Elves and the Shoemaker by Jacob Grimm
	Venn Diagram Organizer
GRADE LEVEL	Grades 2–4

• Read *The Paper Crane* aloud to the class and hold a whole-class discussion about treating others with kindness regardless of their status or class.

- Next, read *The Elves and the Shoemaker* aloud and hold another discussion about being kind to everyone.
- Students will compare and contrast the folktales *The Paper Crane* and *The Elves and the Shoemaker* on a Venn Diagram Organizer.
- Students will use the Venn Diagram Organizer to write an essay that compares the circumstances described in the two stories, concluding with a paragraph focusing on the idea that every person should always be treated with kindness, regardless of their position in life.
- You may want students to write a book report for each of the stories. *The Creative Teacher* contains a variety of creative book report ideas that can be used as oral presentations for the students' perspective of the stories.



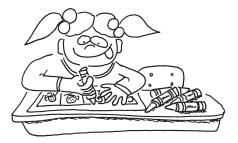


#### **Developing Storyboards for Responding to Literature**

ACTIVITY TYPE Storyboard Making RESOURCES The Paper Crane by Molly Bang Paper, crayons or markers Storyboard Organizer

GRADE LEVEL Grades 2–4

• Review the story *The Paper Crane* with the class, along with a further discussion about treating others with kindness no matter what their status or position in life may be.



• Students will create a storyboard illustrating how the characters in *The Paper Crane* felt and acted. They can use the Storyboard Organizer, pick a character's kind act, and then draw a picture in each box that shows how the kind act was demonstrated.

#### Writing Kind Notes to Classmates

ACTIVITY TYPE Note Writing RESOURCES Note cards with envelopes GRADE LEVEL Grades K-3

- Write (by hand) a kind note to each student in your class and enclose it in an envelope. Pass out the envelopes and allow students to open their envelopes and silently read their notes from you.
- After the students have read the kind notes, read a kind note that you have received aloud to the class, and tell them how it made you feel. Talk about what you think others feel when they receive a kind note.
- Model how to write kind notes using sentence starters such as "I like how you …" and "You have…." Write possible ways of ending the sentences on the board for students who might not know what to write. Possibilities are "always say good morning" or "always look happy" and "the best outfits" or "a great smile."
- Divide the class into groups of 3 to 4 students. Give each student enough note cards to write a kind note for each person in their group.
- If this activity is done at home, the student can write a note of kindness for each member of his or her family.



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#### Expressing Kind Words for Each Letter of the Alphabet

ACTIVITY TYPEWritingRESOURCESColorful die-cut letters for each letter of the alphabet (have extras on hand)GRADE LEVELGrades K-3

- Ask each child to choose a letter of the alphabet.
- Everyone will write a sentence describing a random act of kindness on the letter. For example, **A**—It's important to be **available** to my family when they need me; **B**—I will help my sister put her **bike** away when she asks; **C**—I will be **courteous** to people who are older than I am.
- Post these letters in alphabetical order on chart paper or along the front wall of the classroom. They can then be used throughout the Kindness and Caring unit.
- If this activity is done at home, ask students to write a sentence for each letter. This can be done over several days.



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#### **Responding to Literature: The Story of Three Whales**

ACTIVITY TYPE Guided Reading, Discussion RESOURCES *The Story of Three Whales* by Giles Whittell Pros and Cons Organizer GRADE LEVEL Grades 2–4

- Read *The Story of Three Whales* by Giles Whittell aloud to the class. This true adventure story about three whales that get trapped in a prison of ice has a happy ending because of the kindness and hard work of the people who save them.
- Follow with a discussion about all the acts of kindness that took place in the story.



- Have students work in small groups to generate a list of acts of kindness, and then each group can share its list with the class. You may want them to use the Pros and Cons Organizer.
- As a whole group, consider ways that the students can do something to help save the whales. Make a list of these ideas. Afterward, choose one idea that can actually be accomplished during the unit, such as holding a bake sale to earn donation money for the "Save the Whales" cause.
- If this activity is done at home, consider doing a fund-raiser in the neighborhood, through the community center, or at a place of worship.

#### **Literature Review and Studying Narratives**

ACTIVITY TYPE	Writing
RESOURCES	The Story of Three Whales by Giles Whittell
GRADE LEVEL	Grades 2-4

Students will summarize the plot organization of *The Three Whales* in a 5-paragraph essay. Ask them to organize their 5 paragraphs using these guidelines: (1) State the problem,
(2) state at least two ideas that didn't work and why they foil

(2) state at least two ideas that didn't work and why they failed,

(3) state the idea that solved the problem and how kindness made it work, (4) state how the characters felt about the resolution, and (5) state possible future courses of action to prevent the problem from recurring.

• This helps students think about the role that kindness plays in the treatment of animals. It may be a good time to plan a visit to a local animal shelter or to think about ways that students can volunteer or raise money to help the shelter.

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#### Identifying Kind Acts in Current Events

ACTIVITY TYPE	Summarization
RESOURCES	Local newspaper
	Story Analysis Organizer
GRADELEVEL	Grades 2–8

• Share with students an article from a current newspaper in which kindness is the key element in the article. Working together, write a summary of the article, focusing on the acts of kindness that were demonstrated.



- In small groups or individually, students will then skim a newspaper to identify other stories that demonstrate kindness. Allow time for this. You may want students to use the Story Analysis Organizer.
- Either in small groups or individually, students will write a summary of the article that they have found, focusing on the acts of kindness that were demonstrated. These summaries can be shared aloud with others. Encourage students to use their summaries as a conversation starter at the dinner table.

#### **Kindness to Animals**

ACTIVITY TYPE	Poster Art
RESOURCES	Large drawing paper, animal pictures, crayons and markers
	Journal Page Template
GRADE LEVEL	Grades 2–5

• Begin a class discussion by asking why we should be kind to animals, including animals that are not pets. Be sure to include discussion of the question "What can we do to show that we are kind to animals?"



• After the discussion, provide students with drawing paper and ask them to label the top of the paper with a statement describing one way to be kind to animals. Students will then create posters illustrating their statements. You may want students to record their work using the Journal Page Template.

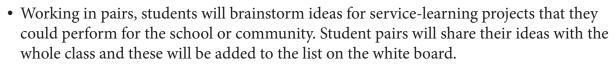
#### **Community Service-Learning Project**

ACTIVITY TYPE Pair Share, Read-Aloud

RESOURCES Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, Missionary of Charity by Mary Kathleen Glavich

GRADE LEVEL Grades 2–8

- Read *Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, Missionary of Charity* aloud to the students. Ask them to recall specific humanitarian projects organized by Mother Teresa from the book. List these humanitarian projects on the white board.
- If possible, invite a leader of a local community organization to discuss how the organization works and how students can contribute.



- As a group, the class chooses one community service-learning project that it can carry out during this unit.
- If this activity is done at home, the student and his or her family can choose a service-learning project to do together.

# Developing a List of Kind Acts for the Acts of Kindness Wall

ACTIVITY TYPE List Making

RESOURCES The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

Chart paper, butcher paper, markers, index cards or sticky notes

Web Organizer

GRADE LEVEL Grades 2–8

- Read *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein aloud to the class.
- Have students work in groups of 3 to 4 to discuss how this story demonstrates kindness.
- Ask students to share their thoughts and chart all the ways that the tree demonstrates kindness toward the boy. You may want students to use a Web Organizer for this activity.
- Students will use individual index cards or sticky notes for writing at least 5 ways that people have shown them kindness.





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- The class will then create an Acts of Kindness wall (a large sheet of butcher paper attached to a wall where students can post acts of kindness). Throughout the month, students will be encouraged to read the Acts of Kindness wall and to post additional acts of kindness on the wall, using index cards or sticky notes.
- If this activity is done at home, for each day during the unit, the student can use a large sheet of paper for posting acts of kindness that have been shown to him or her, as well as acts of kindness that he or she has shown to others.

#### **Kindness Inventory**

ACTIVITY TYPE	List Making
RESOURCES	Chart paper
GRADE LEVEL	Grades 1–3

• Remind students that kindness can be demonstrated very simply through words. We can always find at least one nice thing to say about someone. We need to try to find the good in everyone and every situation.



- Create a list of all the students in the class on a sheet of lined paper, skipping every other line. Distribute this list to every student. Students will write one nice thing about every student in the class.
- For each student, compile a list of the nice things that were written about him or her for the student to keep.
- Students can reflect on the kindness of their peers.
- If this activity is done at home, the student can write one nice thing about each member of the immediate and/or extended family.

#### **Giving to Charity**

ACTIVITY TYPE	Service-Learning Project	
RESOURCES	Letter of intent	
	Collection container	
GRADELEVEL	Grades K-8	

• Discuss the idea of giving to others who are less fortunate, and talk about the many charities that are available. Share a list of local charities that young people would be interested in helping (for example, homeless shelter, animal shelter, church, families who have been affected by tragedy).



- Students will select a local charity and collect donations in the form of change, clothes, canned goods, old toys, or whatever is needed by the specific charity.
- A service-learning project such as this needs to be cleared with the school administrator, and a letter of intent must be written, approved, and sent home. Older students should develop the content of the letter of intent as part of a whole-class discussion, and then it should be written by the students themselves. Participation should be optional.
- Students may wish to lead the entire school in a collection drive.
- If this activity is done at home, the project can continue throughout the year, with participation by the whole family; donations might be given to a variety of charities.

#### **Story of Kindness Class Books**

ACTIVITY TYPE Research, Writing, Summarization RESOURCES Computer, paper, colored pencils, Internet Character Trait Hunt Organizer

GRADE LEVEL Grades 3–8



- Students will search on the Internet for a story about kindness. A good website to use is www.dailygood.org.
- Students will cut and paste the stories they find into a Word document and print them out. The stories can then be illustrated and summarized. Students should tell why they chose their story, and they should include what the act of kindness was and how it made a difference. You may want students to use the Character Trait Hunt Organizer for their research.
- Story summaries will be shared with the class.
- After the students share their stories, create a class book of the stories. Students can take turns reading the class book during silent reading time.
- If this activity is done at home, the student can collect 5 stories and complete this same assignment for each. The stories can be compiled into a short book to read throughout the unit.

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#### **Movie Review**

ACTIVITY TYPE	Summarization, Analysis
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RESOURCES Video: *Charlotte's Web*, *Stuart Little*, or *Beauty and the Beast* for younger students; *Pay It Forward* for older students

Paper

**Review Organizer** 

GRADE LEVEL Grades 3–8

- Share a relevant movie review with students.
- Explain that the students will be writing a movie review that focuses on the acts of kindness in the movie.
- The class will watch *Charlotte's Web*, *Stuart Little*, *Beauty and the Beast*, or *Pay It Forward* (you may need a parental consent form for students in grades 4–8).
- After watching the movie, the class will discuss it as a group and identify acts of kindness in the movie. Students will then write a review of the movie, highlighting the acts of kindness that they observed in it. This activity can be done individually, in pairs, or in small groups. You may want students to use the Review Organizer.
- Students will present their reviews in front of the class, awarding the movie a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down."
- If this activity is done at home, the activity can be turned into a family movie night. The student can write a review and give the movie a "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down."



#### **Creating Kindness Certificates**

ACTIVITY TYPEDiscussion, WritingRESOURCESChart paper, 4" × 6" index cards, envelopesGRADE LEVELGrades K-2

- Ask the students, "Do you like to get gifts?" and "Do you like to give gifts?" Ask the students why they think it feels good to give a gift.
- Continue the discussion by asking the students whether their personal wealth allows them to buy the things they want to buy for the people they love. Ask students how we can give gifts if we don't



have money to buy what we want. Follow up with this question: "Could there be gifts that cannot be bought?" Allow the children to brainstorm a list of possible free gifts (for example, homemade gifts and services). Record their ideas on chart paper.

- Introduce the concept of "kindness gifts" as gifts they can give that do not cost money and that will make someone feel good. Discuss when and to whom we could give "kindness gifts." Show the 4" × 6" cards to the students and explain that they will write a "kind service" on each, such as "I will help you clean your desk" or "I will make a picture for you." Explain that they will be giving that service to someone in the class.
- Have each student write one "kind service" on a card to create a kindness certificate. They may use some ideas from the list brainstormed as a group.
- Students will write their name on the certificate and put it in an envelope. Place all the envelopes in a box. Then have each student pull one envelope out of the box. Provide time for the students to give and receive the "kind services."
- Discuss with the class how they felt when they gave their gifts. Ask students questions such as "Did the gift you gave or received have a value?" and "Could you place a monetary value on the 'kindness gifts'?"
- Ask students to propose reasons that people would choose to volunteer their time, talent, or treasures. Provide materials for the students to make one or more kindness certificates to take home for their family members.
- If this activity is done at home, the student can create a certificate for each member of the family.

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#### **Kindness Collage**

ACTIVITY TYPE	Read-Aloud, Art
RESOURCES	The Kindness Quilt by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
	Pre-made collage, poster board, magazines
GRADE LEVEL	Grades K–3

- Before the class meets, prepare a collage in the shape of a heart using a large sheet of poster board. Pictures on the collage should include images of people or things that are related to kindness. Display the collage so the students can see clearly what the lesson will be about.
- Read *The Kindness Quilt* by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace aloud to the class. After reading the book, discuss with the whole class the different types of kindness demonstrated in the story.
- Students will trace a heart onto poster board. After cutting out the heart shape, they will look through magazines to find pictures that depict kindness. Students will then cut out the pictures and glue them onto the heart-shaped poster board, filling the entire heart.
- Students will share about some of the pictures in their collages with one another.

#### Lists of Kind Acts You Can Do for Your Friends

ACTIVITY TYPE	Read-Aloud, Writing	
RESOURCES	I Miss Franklin P. Shuckles by Ulana Snihura and Leanne	e Franson
	Chart paper	
	Story Analysis Organizer	MINNE
GRADE LEVEL	Grades K-3	

• Read *I Miss Franklin P. Shuckles* aloud to the class. In this story, Molly Pepper's friend tries to be involved with her group at school, but she shuns him and isn't very nice. After she begins to feel lonely, she wants him to be her friend again.



- After the read-aloud, discuss why a friend may no longer want to be your friend if he or she is shunned by you or your group of buddies. Talk with the students about times when this has happened to them or when they have done this to others.
- Students will complete the Story Analysis Organizer, where they will discuss the ways that Franklin P. Shuckles goes out of his way to be Molly's friend. They will also write about the many things that Molly did to push him away, as well as all the kind things she did to try to get him to be her friend again.
- In table groups or individually, students can make a list of 5 to 10 kind things they do for their own friends.

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#### Responding to Literature and Sharing Ideas About Kindness

ACTIVITY TYPE Read-Aloud, Writing

RESOURCES Chicken Sunday by Patricia Polacco Cookies, overhead projector Web Organizer

GRADE LEVEL Grades 2–5

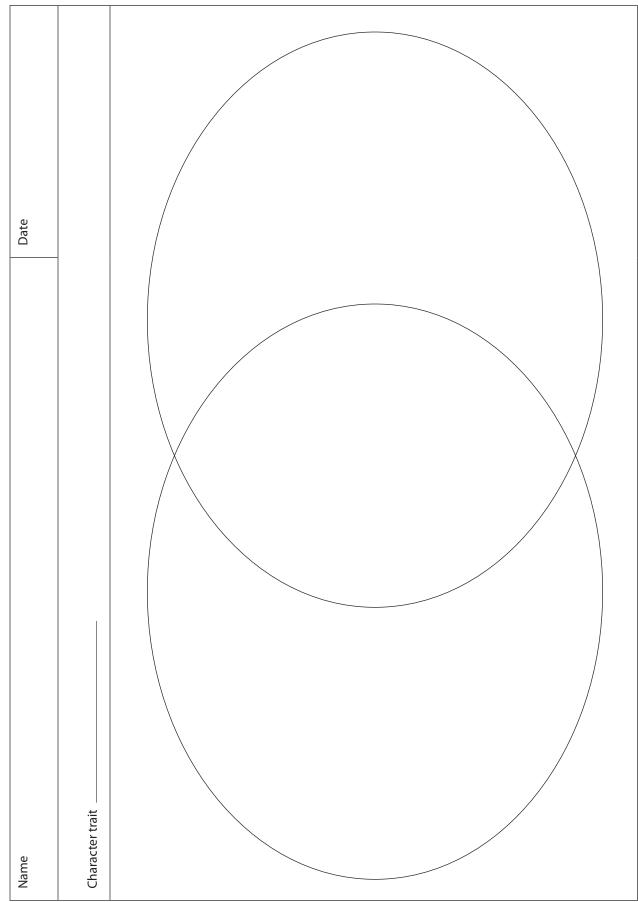
• Hand out cookies to half of the class and invite them to eat their cookies in front of the others. Ask the students that had a cookie how they felt about it. Then ask the

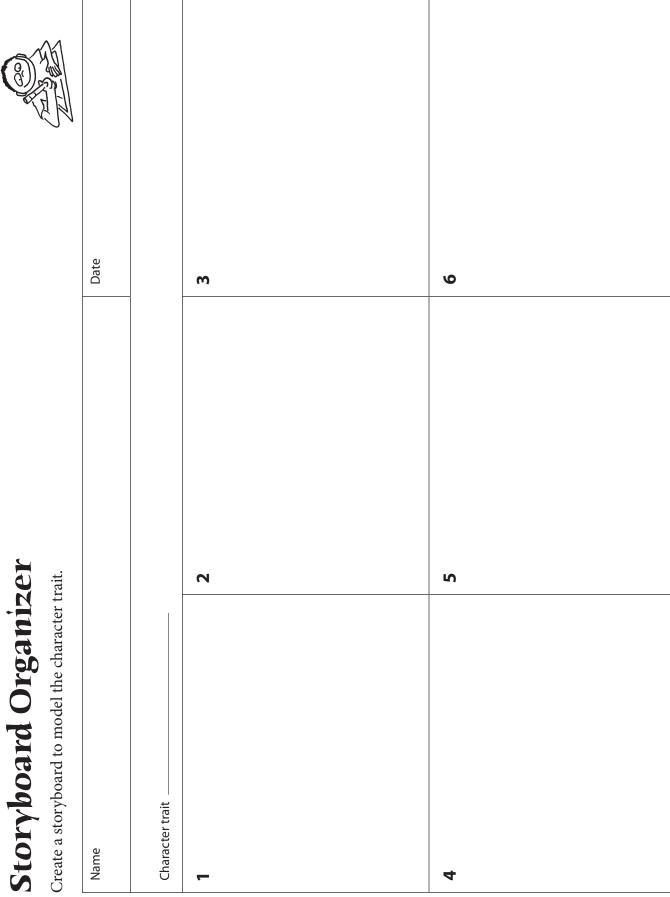


students that didn't have a cookie how they felt about it. Was this a kind thing to do? Pass out cookies to the rest of the class.

- Read *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco aloud to the class. Discuss the acts of kindness in the story.
- Review the topic of kindness, using the overhead projector or the board. Ask students to discuss what they know about kindness either in pairs or with their table group.
- Have students write nonstop for 5 minutes about what they understand kindness to mean to them. Ask for volunteers to read their ideas to the class. As different students share their ideas of kindness, write descriptions of kindness on the overhead projector or on the board. Students should then copy these ideas onto a Web Organizer to use for their writing project.
- Using the information from the Web Organizer on kindness, students choose an individual who has shown them acts of kindness. Students then write about that individual, telling how kindness made a difference in that person's life or the lives of others.

# Venn Diagram Organizer



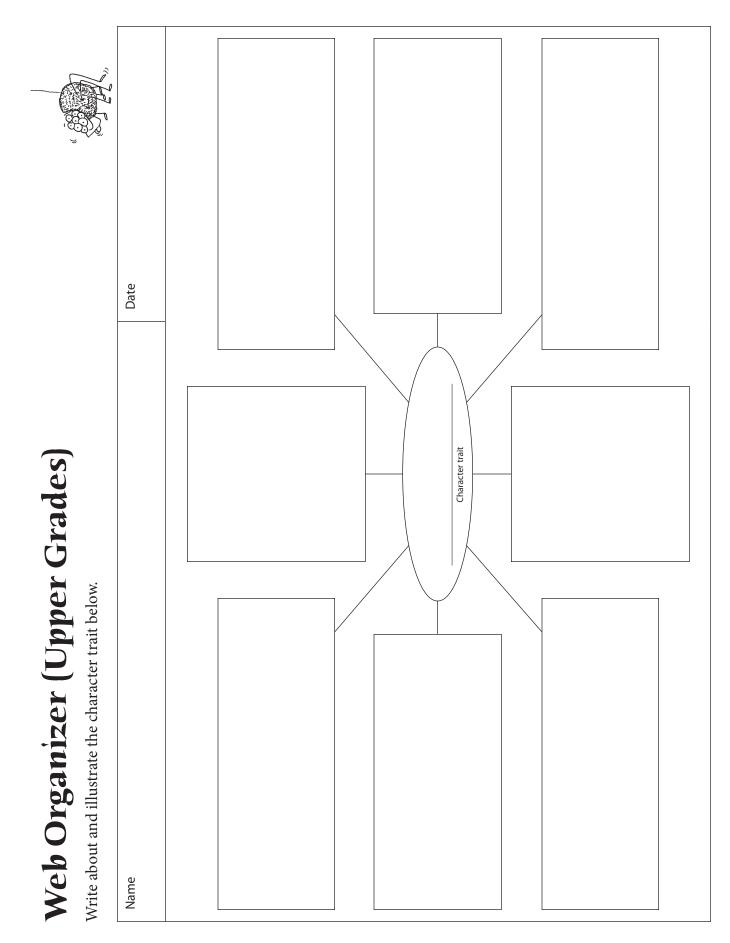


# **Pros and Cons Organizer**

Name	Date		
Character trait			
PROs	CONs		
If I <b>do</b> show	If I <b>don't</b> show		
•	•		
•	•		
•	•		
•	•		
	•		

# **Story Analysis Organizer**

Name		Date
Character trait		
Character		
Character biography		
Setting		
<b>Plot</b> (What is the plot/problem in the story?)		
Examples of the character trait		
<b>Resolution</b> (How did this character trait help to resolve the problem?)		



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# **Character Trait Hunt Organizer**

Name	Date	
Story		
Character Cha	racter trait	
Character trait example (page)		
How did the character demonstrate the character trait? What was the outcome?		
<b>Character trait example</b> (page) How did the character demonstrate the character trait? What was the outcome?		
<b>Character trait example</b> (page)		
How did the character demonstrate the character	trait? What was the outcome?	
	Y TT	

# **Review Organizer (Upper Grades)**

Name		Date
Character trait	Show	
Character Times		