



Lesson Overview

Title: Introduction to The Shoebox Project 2

Grade Level

Gr. 4-6

Lesson Type

Class and individual

Duration



Subject

**Social Studies
Language Arts
Drama**

Skill(s) Developed

**Collaboration
Communication
Creative Thinking**

Topic: Building kindness, empathy and dignity

Learning Goals :

By the end of this lesson, learners will begin to understand the pillars of The Shoebox Project including concepts related to empathy, kindness and dignity.

Materials Needed:

- Chart Paper
- Markers
- Musical Homes activity worksheet
- Dignity Self-portrait activity worksheet

Pre-Requisites

Introduction to Homelessness

Introduction to Homelessness 2

Introduction the The Shoebox Project



Introduction to The Shoebox Project 2

Gr. 4-6

Building kindness, empathy and dignity

PREPARATION

To prepare yourself and the learners for this lesson please see the [Teacher's Glossary](#) below for definition related to kindness, empathy and dignity. Instructor should also review all discussion questions for each activity in the lesson.

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1: Musical Homes

Activity 2: Dignity in a Shoebox

RESOURCES

Sam and the Lucky Money-[Read aloud](#)

Shoebox Sam- [Kindle edition](#)

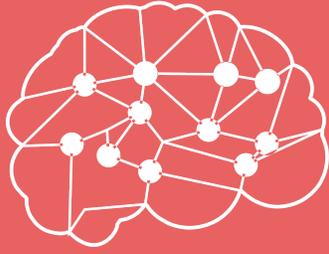
LESSON OUTLINE

1 Begin this lesson by reviewing the following terms with the class: intersectionality, privilege, and poverty from the previous lesson : [Introduction to The Shoebox Project](#). 2 The instructor will read the short story 'Sam and the Lucky Money' by Karen Chin and 'Shoebox Sam' by Mary Barrett with the class to introduce the definition of kindness and empathy. The learners will complete **Activity 1: Musical Homes** as a class. Then, the instructor will introduce dignity to the class by doing **Activity 2: Dignity in a Shoebox** and use The SBP Fact Sheet 2 to outline the goals of The Shoebox Project and how it relates to building kindness, empathy and dignity in their community. 3 Instructor should continue with the next lesson: [The Right to a House.](#)

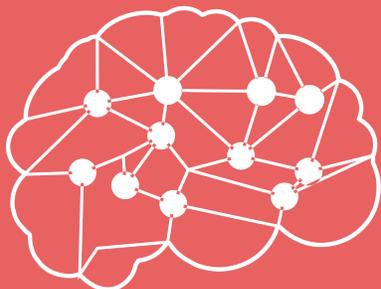
EVALUATION

After the completion of the lesson, the instructor may use the following rubric(s) to evaluate the learners.

Evaluation Rubric(s): Collaboration skills, Communication skills Creative thinking skills



Activity



Title: Musical Homes

Grade Level

Gr. 4-6

Lesson Type

Class

Duration



Subject

Social studies
Drama
Language Arts

Skill(s) Category

Team building
Brainstorming

Topic: Introduction to The Shoebox Project 2

Materials Needed:

- Sam and the Lucky Money-Read aloud
- Shoebox Sam- Kindle edition / Read aloud

Instructions :

1. Instructor will define empathy with the learners by asking discussion questions 1 and 2
2. Read the following stories with the learners: 'Sam and the Lucky Money by Karen Chin and Shoebox Sam by Mary Barrett followed by discussion questions 3.
3. Instructor will introduce the game 'Musical Homes. This is played like musical chairs. Rearrange the classroom chairs in a large circle . Play a song of your choice and when the music stops, students are to find a chair safely. Let the students know that every chair in this game represents a home. Remove a chair each round. When the music stops, the student without a chair is the "person without a home" ONLY if the chosen chair has one of the scenarios placed underneath it. This person will read the scenario aloud to the class before sitting out on the side.
4. Once complete, follow up the activity with discussion question 4 and 5.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is empathy? Why is it important to be empathetic?
2. How can you show empathy toward others?
3. How is empathy & kindness shown in the stories?
4. Which scenario stood out to you the most?
5. What are some ways that we can offer kindness and compassion toward people experiencing homelessness?

Musical Homes

Instructions: Play a song of your choice and when the music stops, students are to find a chair safely. Let the students know that every chair in this game represents a home. Remove a chair each round. When the music stops, the learner who does not get a seat is the person without a home. This person will choose 1 of the scenarios at random below to read out loud before sitting out on the side.

Scenario 1: I'm 10 years old. My brothers are six and seven and my sister is two. It's just my mom and us kids. Landlords tell my mom they will not rent to families with more than three children. My uncle lets us sleep on the floor in his apartment. My brothers and I miss a lot of school because we don't sleep very well at night. My back hurts and my uncle is up at night making noise so I can't sleep. When I do go to school my teacher gets upset at me a lot for not paying attention. I try to pay attention in class but she never sees me trying. I am just so tired.

Scenario 4: My dad left us last year. I'm nine, my sister is two and the baby is six months old. The landlord told us we had to move out. My mom wants to work, but she has nobody to watch us so she can go out and look for a job. We live in our car. Sometimes my mom leaves us alone at McDonald's so she can go to an appointment. I try to do my homework there.

Scenario 7: I'm eight. I love to play hockey. When I was at school the other day I tried to join in on a hockey game that other boys in the playground were playing. They did not let me play. They said that I stink and am dirty. It is hard to keep clean when you have to share a bathroom with lots of other families. I live in a shelter. Sometimes I don't get to use the tub for a week. I almost never get my laundry done as my mom never has enough quarters. I just wish we had our own place.

Scenario 2: I'm in eighth grade. We've moved so many times, I've gone to 10 different schools. We keep living with my mom's friends, until they get tired of us. I'm not a very good reader, and I have a lot of trouble understanding math. I get mad a lot at school, and I'm always in trouble. You'd be mad, too, if you didn't get to stay in one place long enough to make friends. I just wish we could have our own place, instead of just staying with my mom's friends.

Scenario 5: I'm seven. My mom, my sister, and I live with Grandma in her apartment. It's pretty crowded with all our clothes and everything. We just found out that we can't stay there very much longer because Grandma is going to move to a retirement home. I wonder where we will live now?

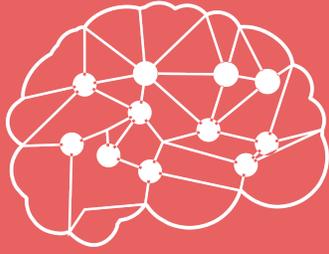
Scenario 8: I am in Grade 5. My birthday is coming up next week. At my school we are supposed to bring in treats for the class when it is our birthday. Teachers say we don't have to but every kid does. I know my mom can't get treats for my class. We are living in a shelter and my mom is saving up to get her own place. Maybe I will just say I am sick on my birthday so I don't have to go to school.

Scenario 3: I am 12 years old. My dad hurt his back last year and can't find a job. We have lots of medical bills. My mom works at Subway, but doesn't earn enough for us to have our own apartment. We had to move out of our last apartment because we couldn't pay the rent. We live in our car now. Other kids at school talk about friends and sleepovers and parties and all I can think about is where I will be taking a shower tonight.

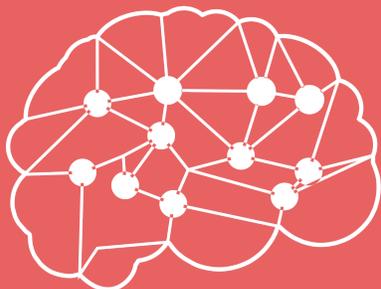
Scenario 6: I'm 8 and my mom is a single mom. She works in a Laundromat and only makes \$8.00 per hour. The owner lets us sleep in the Laundromat at night because we don't have enough money to rent an apartment. I don't tell any of my friends at school this. I don't think that my teacher even knows. I am embarrassed.

Scenario 9: My dad and I don't need anyone. I am 12 years old and I live with my dad in a tent by the river. When I go to school I get picked on almost every day, but I don't care. I won't be at that school long anyway because I will be moving into my new place soon. My teacher complains that I don't finish my homework but I won't have to deal with her soon when I move. Why should I care what she thinks? She doesn't care that I live in a tent. She gives me these projects where I have to go to the library and research things. I can't get a library card because I don't have an address and it is really hard to keep everything dry when it rains. In a couple of weeks I am sure that I will have my own place with my dad.





Activity



Title: Dignity in a Shoebox

Grade Level

Gr. 4-6

Lesson Type

Class

Duration



Subject

Social Studies
Language Arts

Skill(s) Category

Analyzing
Brainstorming
Writing or Typing

Topic: Introduction to The Shoebox Project 2

Materials Needed:

- Chart Paper
- Markers
- Video: [Homeless Day Spa Surprise](#)
- The Shoebox Project Fact Sheet 2
- Dignity in a shoebox activity worksheet

Instructions :

1. Instructor will introduce this activity by defining and discussing question 1 with the class.
2. Learners will brainstorm ways that they can show respect and dignity to others
3. Show the video “Homeless Day Spa Surprise” by Prank it Forward, followed by discussion questions 2-4.
4. Instructor will introduce the goals of The Shoebox Project using the fact sheet below and then learners will follow the instructions to complete the Dignity in a shoebox activity worksheet.
5. Evaluation Rubric(s): Communication Skills , Collaboration Skills

Discussion Questions:

1. What is dignity?
2. Why do you think the 'spa day' meant so much to the people who attended?
3. How was kindness shown in the video? Dignity>
4. How does kindness relate to dignity?
5. Why is showing others dignity important?

Dignity in a Shoebox



Instructions: Answer the questions below after reviewing The Shoebox Project Fact Sheet 2.

1. How could you help foster dignity in a person who is impacted by homelessness?

2. How does The Shoebox Project promote dignity through its services?



The Shoebox Project

Gestures of Kindness

The goal of The Shoebox Project is to provide women experiencing homelessness and poverty with a small gesture of kindness. These gestures reflect the pillars in which the organization stands on: kindness, empathy and dignity.

You are loved

- Women who are homeless often report feeling like they're on edge of society looking in
- The Shoebox Project tries to let women experiencing homelessness know that they have not been forgotten and that they remain a valued member of their community

KINDNESS



You matter

- Women living in poverty have to make tough personal sacrifices everyday in order to survive
- A simple but thoughtful gift can let a woman know that no matter what her circumstances, she deserves to feel special and to love herself

DIGNITY



You are not alone

When a person makes the effort to assemble a gift for a women living in a shelter, it brings to mind the challenges she may be facing. Many people who make Shoeboxes say it helps them understand the realities of poverty and that homelessness can happen to anyone.

EMPATHY





GLOSSARY



Grade Level

Gr.4-6

Subject

Social Studies
Language Arts
Music

Lesson Title

Introduction to The
Shoebox Project 2

Description

The glossary section provides definitions and explanations for the lesson.

DEFINITIONS

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to recognize, understand, and share the thoughts and feelings of another person, animal, or fictional character. Developing empathy is crucial for establishing relationships and behaving compassionately. It involves putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

Dignity

Dignity means being valued and respected for what you are, what you believe in, and how you live your life. Treating other people with dignity means treating them the way we'd like to be treated ourselves.

LESSON RESOURCES

1. **Teacher's Guide**- The teachers's guide provides an introduction to The Shoebox Project lessons. This includes information about The Shoebox Project, why it matters and the learning objectives for these lesson plans. Please [click here](#) for details.
2. **Musical Homes Activity**- [Homelessness Hub Teachers Toolkit](#)
3. **Evaluation rubrics**- [Click here](#) to download