

ACTIVITIES FOR “IF ONLY”

THEME: *“If only, if only we’d learn to share our bread, the whole world could be fed. There’s plenty here to spare. If only, if only fair were everywhere.”*

LANGUAGE ARTS: Listen to the Tom Chapin song “If Only.” What does it mean to “share”? How do you feel when other people don’t share with you? What kinds of things do you share? Sharing with someone makes the other person feel good. Does it also make you feel good?



THE FAIR EXERCISE: Teacher Preparation: bring in some cookies (or pretzels, crackers, etc.). Cut strips of paper in two colors (equal numbers of red and blue strips), approximately 6” long by 1/2” wide. Make sure there are enough for each child in the class to get one. Mix up the bands and put them in a paper bag. In the classroom: Have each child choose one strip from the bag without looking. Put the strip in a loop around the child’s wrist, and secure with tape. Tell them that the children wearing a blue wristband can come to the front of the room and take two cookies. This will naturally cause a reaction in the group wearing red wristbands.



Have the children in each group discuss how this made them feel. How do they feel about the children in the other group? What does fair mean? How does unfairness make you feel? What could the children wearing the blue bands do to make things fair? How does this exercise relate to hunger? Why do some people have food and others do not? What would cause you to be in one group or the other? Can it change over a lifetime? Are there ways to help someone change the group they are in?

THE GOLDEN RULE: The Golden Rule teaches us to think about the feelings of others. Make a group of signs, each with a single word that embodies the message of the Golden Rule: cooperation, generosity, kindness, respect, friendly, compassion, empathy, helpful. Discuss each word with the class, and how keeping these words in mind will help you to treat others. Ask each student to choose one word and write a story about acting this way. Post these signs on the wall of the classroom, as a daily reminder.

The Golden Rule:
*Treat others the way
You want to be treated.*

ACTIVITIES FOR “IF ONLY” (continued)

IF ONLY: If you were a new student in the school, how would you feel? Scared? Lonely? Lost? How would you like to be treated? What could you do to make the new student feel at home? Can you show them around the school, so they know where the lunchroom, library, bathroom, auditorium and gym are? Ask them to join your sports team? Invite them to sit with you and your friends at lunchtime? Ask your Mom to set up a play date? By including the new person, you will make them feel more comfortable in a new place. And you can make a new friend!



THE EMPTY BOWLS PROJECT: Empty Bowls is an international grass-roots effort to fight hunger. The basic premise is simple: Potters and other craftspeople, educators and others work with the community to create handcrafted bowls. Guests are invited to a simple meal of soup and bread. In exchange for a cash donation, guests are asked to keep a bowl as a reminder of all the empty bowls in the world. The money raised is donated to an organization working to end hunger and food insecurity. Hold an Empty Bowls event at your school! The students will own it more if they make the bowls and/or the soup or bread themselves. If that isn't possible, bring in volunteers and artists and donated food from the community. More info is available at www.emptybowls.net.



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