
Introduction

The purpose of this unit is to introduce students to a variety of friendship issues using high-quality children's literature. Brief summaries and suggested activities have been provided for each primary literature selection. *A Unit on Friendship* includes literature selections and related activities in reading, writing, speaking, listening, the arts, math and social studies. The activities have been collected and organized to teach about the following friendship issues:

- Making Friends and Friendly Behavior
- Difficulties in Friendships
- Mixed-Gender Friendships
- Intergenerational Friendships
- Interracial and Cross Cultural Friendships
- Imaginary Friends
- Loss of a Friend

Each issue is explored through at least one literature selection. However, in the event that the main literature selection is not available in your library, some additional literature suggestions have been provided to help you identify other possible resources. Furthermore, the additional selections can be used to extend or modify the activities and teachings of the main issues to better meet your students' needs. You may wish to refer to page 38 where you will find a *List of Children's Literature* that is related to the friendship theme.

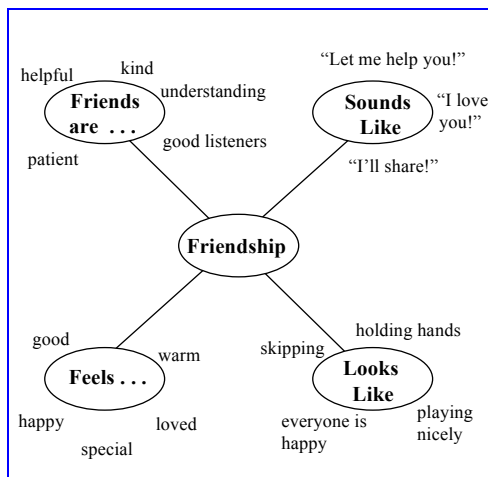
The literature-based activities outlined in this unit do not have pre-assigned time requirements. Therefore, you decide if the activities can be completed in a given period or if your students need additional time to complete the activities successfully. This unit can be used in its entirety but it has been designed so that each section or issue can stand-alone. If, for example, you are teaching this unit to grade three students and you want to focus on friendly behavior, the sections on losing a friend and imaginary friends can be easily omitted. This arrangement allows for a great deal of teacher choice and flexibility.

About the Literature Selections

Although most of the literature selections are picture books and the majority of the activities are **designed for use with K-3 students, many of the activities can be modified for use with older students**. In some cases, the additional literature suggestions include novels and more difficult books. Novels and books above student reading ability can be read aloud to students during a daily reading program or used to supplement the unit in other ways. It is up to you to decide how the literature selections should be read: out loud, silently, in groups, as a class, and so forth.

Finally, in the sections entitled *Getting Started* and *Wrapping Up* you will find several activities that can be used to introduce and conclude *A Unit on Friendship* successfully.

Building Friendship Vocabulary



Create a class web of friendship words! Place the word *friendship* in the center and make up categories for the main web titles, such as: *sounds like*, *looks like*, *feels*, *friends are*, *memories*, *friends we have*, and so forth. Students contribute words that they personally associate with the concept of friendship. Accept all words and eliminate words that do not belong at a later time *only* if the class agrees that the word has nothing to do with friendship. (For example, a student may contribute *fight* as her friendship word and although we do not think of fighting as a friendly thing to do, fighting and disagreeing are often part of friendship.) This friendship web can be posted on a bulletin board and continually

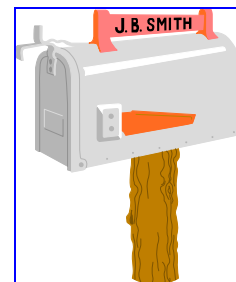
modified throughout the unit. Encourage students to use as many of the words as possible in their own writing. Teachers can use the web to address any misconceptions students may have about friendship or to identify areas where students are lacking experience and knowledge. To extend this webbing activity students can *Web a Friend* by placing a friend's name in the center of a web. Then, they can web characteristics, experiences, events, and so forth.

Friendship Dictionary

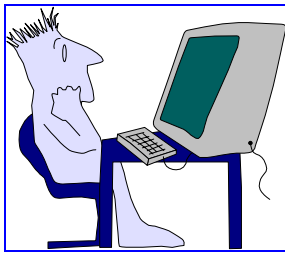
Encourage students to collect friendship words in a personal friendship dictionary. Younger students can print their favorite words and then draw a picture to remind them what the written word says. Encourage older children to write sentences or record memories that use the friendship words. Students can collect the words from the literature they read, their own experiences and from the class webbing activity. When writing, encourage children to refer to their dictionary for the correct spelling of friendships words.

Secret Friends

Assign each student a secret friend. The secret friends are only allowed to correspond with one another in writing by 'mailing' letters for delivery to the personal mailboxes. Provide a mailbox for each student and a mail drop for the anonymous notes. A student can be assigned to deliver the notes to the proper mailboxes. Allow time each day for students to write a note to their secret pals and to check for mail. Consider assigning occasional topics for students to write about (write something nice about your secret pal today or compliment your secret pal if you have seen him or her doing something friendly). At the end of the unit have the secret friends reveal themselves to their partners. Note: If a child is sick write a note to his or her secret pal so that a student does not learn who his or her secret pal is through the absence of a letter. The *Secret Friends Mailing* program can be introduced by reading *Anna's Secret Friend* by Y. Tsutsui. Teachers can also use the mailboxes to correspond with individual students.



Pen Pals/ Key Pals



- Set up a pen pal/ key pal (e-mail) program by contacting another classroom teacher who is interested in doing the same (in another country, city or local school).
- Schedule time to read mail and respond to pen pals.
- When the unit is over, encourage students to keep their pen pals.
- If students have key pals or pen pals from other cities and countries, use the pal's location to teach about map reading skills, geography

and the cultures of different people from around the world.

Advice Column -- Daily Writing Activity

Find a spot on the wall where you can post a daily (or weekly) friendship related problem. Give the students time to read the problem and to write a reply to the anonymous person who has the problem. Student responses can be posted beside the original letter for everyone to read. This on-going activity will encourage students to think about a variety of friendship problems and they will begin to consider possible alternatives when they find themselves in a “friendly” bind. Possible problems may include: jealousy, fighting, sharing, telling someone's secrets, rivalry, being teased by peers, dealing with the loss of a friend, and how to make new friends. Consider posting friendship related poetry that presents the joys and sorrows of friendship and encourage students to write anonymous responses.

Bulletin Board -- Friendly Collage

Instruct students to make a friendship bulletin board by creating an enormous collage of friendship words, pictures, stories, poems, riddles and jokes. Students may want to bring pictures from home (clearly identified), cut pictures, words and short stories from magazines, or write descriptions of friends and friendly behaviors. Watch the bulletin board collage grow throughout the unit. Allow time for students to discuss the bulletin board at the end of the unit to reflect on what they have learned.

Friendship Games (Grouping Activities)

Hook Up: Students move freely around an open space. At the sound of a double whistle, students must “hook up” with the person closest to them. The pair becomes “friends” and they can only move if they continue to be “hooked up.” At the sound of a single whistle, students break apart and move on their own again until they hear another double whistle instructing them to hook up again. If students are hooked up already when they hear a double whistle, the pairs then hook up with other pairs. Encourage the students to be creative when hooking up (holding hands, piggy back, one behind the other hopping). If there are an uneven number of children, the double whistle should instruct children to hook up into appropriate group numbers so that no one is left out.

Put It Together: Split the class into two even groups. On small cards have the students from one group write an interesting detail, fact or characteristic about themselves (birthday, initials, color of their clothes). Collect the cards, mix them up and hand them out to the other group (one per student). Allow the students to mingle for 3-5 minutes while they find the original owner of the card that they are holding. Once the owner has been found, the students are in pairs and ready for group work.

Friendship Knots: Students stand in a circle holding hands. One student walks across the circle to the other side (still holding hands) and steps over, or goes under, the hands of the children on the other side of the circle. Students take turns tangling themselves up until no more movement is possible. Students continue to hold hands and try to untangle themselves. To untangle the group, everyone must cooperate. When doing this activity for the first time, children should practice in small groups of 3-5 before the entire class ties a friendship knot.

Reading Center



Refer to the *List of Children's Literature* provided on page 38 for literature suggestions to include in a classroom-reading center. Include books that vary in difficulty and genre so that students are exposed to a variety of literature. Also, encourage children to read in their spare time and allow them choice in their reading material.

