

*"True Friends are like sunflowers
that never fade away, even over
distance and time."*

~Marie Williams Johnstone

Lesson #12: Giving Hope



Hopeful Minds
an iFred.org Project

Topic: Giving Back.

Teacher Notes

This lesson happens in conjunction with a planting of sunflower seeds and writing hope messages for the students who will go through this curriculum the following fall. If the sunflowers are cared for, the students in the fall can even harvest the sunflower seeds and use them for planting in the spring.

Materials needed:

Sunflower seeds

Designated area to plant sunflowers

Note cards to write hope messages. *Please keep messages for the following school year to be utilized with fall lessons.

Pencils

Lesson Steps

Helping others and giving back is a very important part of staying hopeful. It feels good to support other people, reminds us that we are not alone, and allows us to feel compassion and empathy.

1) We are going to practice giving back today by planting sunflowers and writing messages of hope for next year's students.

Your messages of hope will be handed out to students entering class next fall. Those students will be harvesting the sunflowers you are planting right now. Harvesting will provide new sunflower seeds to plant next spring. Messages of hope will continue with every school year.

2) Why sunflowers?

a) After you plant a sunflower seed, what does it need in order to grow? (**Teacher prompt:** Sunlight, water)

In order to get these things, sunflowers must stretch their roots deep into the ground and grow wide leaves. Roots and leaves allow the flower to collect more water and continue growing toward the sunshine.

A sunflower seed is like your own hope.

Growing roots and leaves are like our tools for creating hope. Our tools allow our hope to grow the same way the roots and leaves allow the flower to grow.

a) What were some of these hope tools? (**Teacher Prompt:** meditating, being grateful, and discovering our passion, setting goals and creating action steps, anticipating and overcoming obstacles, finding a hope supporter, giving back.)

b) The flowers purpose is to provide food to humans and birds and bring joy to those that see it. One of the sunflowers goals is to grow toward the sunshine.

In order to do this, the flower must grow a strong stem. This stem supports the flower when it gets very tall and can reach all the sunlight it wants. The flower stem is similar to what happens for us when we rely on supporters to help us remain hopeful.

c) The sunflower will have to overcome obstacles. What are some obstacles the flower might experience? (**Teacher Prompt:** Rocky soil, not enough sunlight, not enough rain, not enough space).

d) After the sunflower grows, it gives back by turning into other products. Do you know anything made from sunflowers? (**Teacher prompt:** sunflower oil, sunflower seed butter, sunflower seeds for eating, other sunflowers)

This is how we can live our lives too. Now that we have learned all of these hope tools, we can encourage and support others to have hope.

“Walk on with hope in your heart and you’ll never walk alone.” Shah Rukh Khan

Activity

Plant sunflowers!

By planting, we are sharing our hope.

Write an encouraging note that will be given to a student in the fall. Tell them how to have hope and why to have hope. Say something that encourages them to use their hope tools.

By giving your message, you are helping someone else have hope and sending a reminder that there is another person who cares. Helping others makes us feel good about ourselves.

- Giving to someone makes us feel happy.
- Giving connects us with other people.
- Giving often brings feelings of gratitude.

Your message and your sunflowers will bring joy, comfort, and HOPE to someone else.

