Elephants are Kind
Primary Lesson Plans: Suggested for Grades 1-3

THEMES
Kindness
Comfort and Care
Compassion
Empathy
Welcoming Others

This lesson uses paired text (fiction and nonfiction) to start great conversations that compare an elephant’s trunk to a child’s nose, arms, hands and even eyes. Discussions will focus on the kindness of an elephant and how it uses its trunk to be kind to others with hugs and gentle touches. Kids will learn more about the physical and social-emotional similarities they have with an elephant.

PART 1: Fiction  Pg. 2
Can Your Nose Touch Your Toes?
by Amy Kesler
8.5” X 11”
Black & white
Ideal for individual student use

Printable included on page 6.

PART 2: Non-Fiction  Pg. 4
Elephants
by Steve Bloom

The Elephant’s Trunk
by Gina Cline & Robbie Byerly

If you don’t already own these books, consider using NED’s Elephant Fact Cards for the nonfiction text. They are available for purchase at ShopNED.

PART 2: Non-Fiction  Download—Elephant Fact Cards SET 1

Enhance your lesson with more downloadable resources from Kindness Adventure.

Check our NED’s Elephant Fact Cards to learn more interesting facts about elephants! This set of three cards will provide you with everything you need to know for the non-fiction part of this lesson.

www.KindnessAdventure.com/Resources.html

Caring is Cool Buttons
These cheerful buttons remind students that it is COOL to be kind, compassionate and CARING towards others.

Each button is 1-3/4” Diameter
Classroom Pack of 30 - $19.00
School Pack of 150 - $80.00

Available on www.ShopNED.com
Elephants are Kind

PART 1: Fiction

Key Vocabulary and Tricky Phrasing:

Pref er - something you like better than something else. Your favorite.

Confused - mixed up, not sure what it true or not.

Tell the Janes (girls) from the Joes (boys) - to recognize a girl from a boy

Trunk - the long nose on an elephant. Not to be confused with the storage area in the back of a car

Before Reading

1. How would you describe an elephant?… Answers will vary. Gray, wrinkly skinned, long nose, big ears, large toenails, etc. Hopefully someone will mention the trunk!

2. How are YOU and an elephant the same? What can YOU do that an elephant can also do? Answers will vary

3. Are elephants smart? What makes you think that? Answers will vary… maybe yes – big head = big brain, elephants never forget-they have great memories so they are smart!

Read: Can Your Nose Touch Your Toes? by Amy Kesler

After Reading

NOTE TO TEACHER: Several of these questions will ask kids to share what they think they know about elephant facts.. They might not know the correct response. Allow kids the opportunity to guess and share wild answers. NED’s paired nonfiction lesson on “Elephant’s Are Kind” will provide the facts to confirm their responses as true or not!

1. What can an elephant do with its trunk? Touch the ground, wave hi, give a hug, wiggle, bend, pick up a rock, carry a backpack, turn a lock, recognize friends

Activity - Try it!

Reread the poem, stopping at each line and ask kids – “Can you do that with your nose?”
Let them try a few things!

2. The elephant’s trunk is like your nose but it can do so much more than your nose. What other body parts is it like? It’s like your hands, arms, nose, and eyes all in one.

3. How is an elephant trunk different from NED’s nose? Answers will vary. Shape, size, functionality. Is your nose more like NED’s nose or the elephant’s trunk?

4. An elephant uses its trunk to recognize friends! How do you recognize your friends? Why do you think elephants don’t do it your way? Elephants use their trunks to smell and touch while people tend to use their eyes (sight) or ears (hearing voice) You might recognize someone by touching their hair or glasses! Elephants have poor eye sigh and must rely on other senses.
5. How does an elephant hug?  Answers may vary.

6. Who do you like to hug? How does it feel when you give a hug?  Answers will vary.  Mom, Dad, Dog, family, friends, stuffed animal. Feels good inside to know that maybe my hug made them feel better.

7. Do you think elephants hug for the same reasons you hug? What do you think an elephant feels when another elephant hugs them?  Answers will vary.  Comfort, safety, affection.

7. NED reminds us to Encourage others. How does a hug encourage others? Can a hug change how you are feeling? How does a hug show that you care?  Answers will vary.  A hug can change you from being sad to being happy with just a squeeze.

8. Do you think elephants are caring and kind? Why or why not?  Answers will vary. Elephants hug. Hugs are kind.

**Activity**
**Use your Senses**
Blindfold one student. Have them try to recognize another student from the class: first by smell, then by touching hands, then hearing them talk and finally taking the blindfold off. Sight is so much easier for us than an elephant.

**Writing Prompts**
**Write and Draw.**  Hugs feel good.

**Write and Draw.**  I Like to Hug.

**Journal Writing:** Finish this thought...I want to be kind like an elephant. (What will you do? How will you show kindness to others?)

**Art and Writing Project**
If I had a trunk instead of a nose
Follow the instructions below to create a paper plate elephant.

1. Cut 9 inch paper plates as shown.
2. Paint pieces gray.
3. Attach trunk and add eyes with cut white and black paper, or draw on eyes with a crayon or marker.
Elephants are Kind

PART 2: Non-Fiction

Key Vocabulary and Tricky Phrasing:

From Book: *The Elephant Trunk*

*Mash* - to smash and make something mushy and easy to eat without a lot of chewing.

From Book: *Elephants*

*Grip* - to hold on tight

*Waggle* - a new way to say wiggle

*Snorkeling* - to go under water and still breathe. Usually a tube goes up above the water so you can get air. An elephant uses his trunk as the tube.

*Tusk* - a large elephant tooth on the outside of the mouth

*Rescue* - to save from a dangerous situation

*Intelligent* - smart, able to reason and understand

*Gentle* - to be kind, and tender

*Memories* - remembering things of the past

Before Reading Activity

The truth about elephants

Make a list of what you think you know about elephant trunks. Depending on your class, this can be done whole group, small group, partners or independently. Use the sheet again to confirm your learning after reading non-fiction text.

Read Non-Fiction Text

*The Elephant’s Trunk*, by Gina Cline & Robbie Byerly (Suggested for grade 1)

*Elephants*, by Steve Bloom 

READ CHAPTERS: *Trunks and Tusks*, pages 10-15; *Elephants and Other Animals*, pages 57-64

After Reading

1. **What can an elephant do with its trunk?** Breathe, smell, pick up things, put things down, reach like an arm, grip like a hand, rub, scratch, waggle, throw, take a shower

2. **How does an elephant hug?** Intertwined trunks

3. **Do you think elephants hug for the same reasons you hug? What do you think an elephant feels when another elephant hugs them?** Answers will vary. Comfort, safety, affection

4. **How does a hug show that you care?**

5. **Are elephants kind and caring animals?** Why? Answers will vary. Always ask WHY kids think what they think so that you can focus on kindness and protection.
Elephants are Kind

PART 2: Non-Fiction, Continued

• UNKIND? Not really...Elephants may stomp other animals – BUT only when in danger, especially if they are protecting their babies! What would your mom or dad or brother or sister do if someone was trying to hurt you?
• KIND! Elephants help carry heavy loads – YES – they knock over BIG trees so that edible branches are low enough for the little elephants to reach.
• KIND or UNKIND? Elephants are kind to people who they have relationships with – if they were a caregiver as a baby, the elephant will remember them for the rest of their lives. They will greet them with hugs from their trunks even if it has been years since they have seen each other. Elephants are only mean to people who are unkind to them.

Elephant are...
Have kids work as a whole class (with teacher transcribing responses) or in small group (with older writers) to complete this sheet.

How many true statements can you make in 5 minutes? Answers will vary and may included many of these:
• Elephants are smart
• Elephants are kind
• Elephants are gentle
• Elephants love their families and friends
• Elephants hug those they love
• Elephants protect their family
• Elephants help other animals
• Elephants show feelings
• Elephants take care of one another

Home Connection

Family Project! Adopt an orphaned baby elephant from Kenya. When NED traveled to Kenya, the All For KIDZ Kindness team adopted a baby elephant.

Learn more about The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and how you can help too. You will love the information and photos that they share each month and it can become a great family activity

Connect with the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust:
Website: www.sheldrickwilderlifetrust.org
Twitter: @DSWT
Facebook: The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust
YouTube: dswtkenya

Resources

Look for more nonfiction books and videos about elephants. Help your students learn more about how compassionate and kind elephants are.
Can Your Nose Touch Your Toes?

By Amy Kesler

Can your nose touch your toes
Or wave hi to a friend?
Can it give a huge hug
Or wiggle and bend?

Or would your nose prefer
To pick up a rock?
Carry your backpack,
Or turn a key in a lock?

Is your nose how you tell
Your friends from your foes?
Tell you mom from your dad?
Tell the Janes from the Joes?

So if someone’s confused,
Be kind, let ‘em knows
How to tell a nose from a trunk
And a trunk from a nose.
Draw a picture of you hugging an elephant. Write a sentence about ‘How do you feel?’

Name
Write and draw. I like hugs.

Name

I like to hug ___________________.
I also like to hug...

1 ________________ 4 ________________

2 ________________ 5 ________________

3 ________________ 6 ________________
If I had a trunk instead of a nose, I could...
What I think I know:  

What I have learned:
How many true statements can you make?

1. Elephants are ____________________________.
2. Elephants are ____________________________.
3. Elephants are ____________________________.
4. Elephants are ____________________________.
5. Elephants are ____________________________.
6. Elephants are ____________________________.
7. Elephants are ____________________________.
8. Elephants are ____________________________.
9. Elephants are ____________________________.
10. Elephants are ____________________________.
11. Elephants are ____________________________.
12. Elephants are ____________________________.
Adopting an Elephant

On a trip to Kenya in 2016, the All for KIDZ Kindness Adventure team adopted a baby elephant at the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Elephant Orphanage. We weren’t there 2 minutes before we all fell in love with all the baby elephants that we saw.

But one in particular captured our hearts in a way that inspired us to act with kindness. She was about 2-1/2 years old and loved to run and frolic with the other baby elephants. She was a happy elephant that day, but her story is one of great sadness.

Many of the elephants at the orphanage were rescued from places like Maasai Mara, Kenya where our team goes on safari and has seen herds of wild elephants. The elephants are a safari favorite and every herd had baby elephants.

But sometimes bad things happen – mom elephants get injured or killed by poachers or babies can get stuck in mud holes and separated from the herd. The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust rescues the babies and helps them to survive those crucial early years. Without the special milk fed to the babies for their first 4 years, they would not survive. And, just like humans, baby elephants are traumatized by events that separate them from their mom and family. The keepers at the orphanage work hard to help the baby elephants feel loved and secure as well as being well fed until they can provide for themselves. Imagine how much milk a 250 pound baby needs!

We loved seeing the baby elephants romp and run, and play with each other. They looked just like preschoolers and kindergarteners at recess with the little ones tagging along with the bigger ones. We even saw pushing and shoving-those naughty elephants! The babies will stay at the orphanage until they are 4-6 years old and weaned from the bottles. The keepers will help them transition back to the wild but there will always be a strong bond between the babies and their keepers. After all, an elephant has a great memory and will never forget.

Start your own kindness adventure by adopting a baby elephant. It will make a great school year project and you’ll get updates and photos of your elephant each month! Visit www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org to learn more.