



# Character Education



## Kindness

Middle School - December, 2005

Dear Teachers:

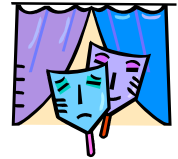
**Kindness** is a trait that should be promoted throughout the year, but is especially important during the holiday season. There are numerous ways in which we can express **kindness** to friends, neighbors, and the community. It is also important to remember that our roles include being **kind** to the environment in which we live. This month's newsletter offers writing exercises, research projects, and an activity for the development of a short skit.

### Activity 1: What is all of the "drama" about kindness?

A great way to be creative about telling the story of "kindness to the environment" is to write your own story or play, and share it with others. Have students work in small groups to brainstorm and create stories about people expressing kindness to the environment. Themes to suggest could include "random acts of kindness," "kindness to animals," "kindness through choosing alternative modes of transportation," or "kindness through recycling." Then, have them write down the story as it would be acted out by the different characters involved. Students could choose either to share their plays by acting out short skits, or by trading the stories with other classmates.

#### Online Resources for Playwriting:

[www.pubinfo.vcu.edu/artweb/playwriting/screentips.html](http://www.pubinfo.vcu.edu/artweb/playwriting/screentips.html)  
[writingcenter.usu.edu/documents/10playwritingtips.pdf](http://writingcenter.usu.edu/documents/10playwritingtips.pdf)



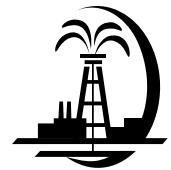
### Activity 2: To Drill or Not to Drill?

**Subjects: Science, Social Studies, Math, Language Arts**

Oil is the fuel that powers the world. Obtaining that oil has a big impact on the surrounding environment. This activity has students deciding whether the benefits of procuring Alaskan oil are worth the potential environmental impact. First, have students find out about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) oil-drilling project by reading pro and con discussions on oil reserve tapping in the ANWR. Next, have them use the Internet to find out where most of the world's oil comes from now. While doing so, have them search for a prediction of how much oil will be found in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and compare that amount to the oil production found elsewhere. In addition, have them research the potential of oil drilling near Florida, for example in the Gulf Coast and in the Atlantic, including the Atlantic drilling ban.

Using this information, students should then create a pie-chart graph or bar graph to display their findings of world oil production. After studying the discussion describing the environmental impacts of the drilling and the justifications for the project, and using their own research into amount of oil projected, students should decide whether they support or oppose the ANWR oil-drilling project. Have students write a position paper stating whether they think drilling for oil there is justified and include their graphs in the paper.

Source: [www.pbs.org/teachersource/thismonth/dec03/index1.shtm](http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/thismonth/dec03/index1.shtm)



#### Online Resources:

NewsHour Online: Drilling in Alaska: [www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/environment/jan-june02/alaska\\_4-17.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/environment/jan-june02/alaska_4-17.html)

Frontline - Blackout: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/blackout/](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/blackout/)

Greatest Oil Reserves by Country: [www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0872964.html](http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0872964.html)

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: A Special Report: <http://arcticcircle.uconn.edu/ANWR/>

EPA - In the News - Gulf Drilling: [www.epa.gov/region6/6xa/home112601.htm](http://www.epa.gov/region6/6xa/home112601.htm)

The Oil and Gas Magazine: [www.oilworks.com/New/exploreb.html](http://www.oilworks.com/New/exploreb.html)

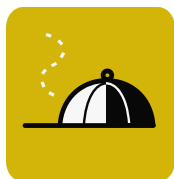
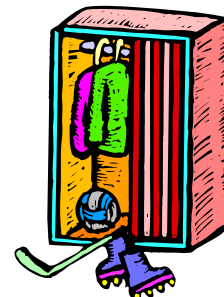
#### Printed Resource:

*The Sacred Balance: Rediscovering Our Place in Nature, 2nd edition* by David Suzuki

## Activity 3: Searching for Kindness

Here is a great activity that can be done at home with friends, neighbors or relatives and will demonstrate kindness by giving back to the community and cutting down on waste as well. Often times there are numerous items around our homes that are no longer used nor wanted. Although these items may have worn out their usefulness personally, they could be extremely useful to others in your community. Start by exploring those areas at home that are seldom used other than for storage (attics, crawlspaces, storage facilities). Hunt for those items that have been outgrown by you and your family, or have been replaced by newer items. Examples of belongings that are most useful to those in need are clothes, toys, stuffed animals, and other household goods.

Next, move on to closets and other places possessions are stored while not in use. Sometimes it is difficult to make up our minds about whether or not to give something up. Remember to emphasize that **kindness** is putting the needs of others first before the needs of your own. After collecting the items, students should locate donation centers that are close to home, such as Goodwill, Salvation Army, Camillus House, thrift stores, and churches. Also, keep in mind that by donating these items to those in need, we are helping to cut down on waste because those items may likely end up in a landfill someday!



Remember to  
be kind to  
the environment!

## Special Award Information: Broward County Science Fair 2006

### Alternative Fuel Special Award

Broward County would like to offer middle school students participating in the Broward County Science Fair the opportunity to compete for the *Alternative Fuel Special Award*. The special award will be given to students who demonstrate the following:

1. An understanding of how to use systematic, scientific processes to solve problems and reach conclusions.  
*Standard 1, Benchmark SC.H.1.3.2*
2. An understanding of the need for protection of the natural systems on Earth.  
*Standard 2, Benchmark SC.D.2.3.1*
3. An understanding of renewable vs. nonrenewable energy sources, and the importance of informed use of natural resources.  
*Standard 2, Benchmark SC.D.2.3.1*
4. A basic understanding of alternative fuels and their benefits.

A representative from the Broward County Environmental Protection Department will be present at the Broward County Science Fair to evaluate projects that meet the above criteria. The prize will be awarded at the Broward County Science Fair Awards Ceremony. The student prize pack includes four tickets to Walt Disney World, a trophy to honor the student's achievement, and a school plaque.

