



Camelot Elementary School Acceptance Celebration Month April 2018 Classroom Toolkit Week 1-Understanding Acceptance

We **Thank You** for being an integral part of our Acceptance Celebration Month!! As our leaders in the classrooms, your guidance and support on these topics is critical to helping us continue to build a culture of acceptance at Camelot.

This special month is brought to you by *The Camelot Acceptance Team*. This team is made up of school administrators, teachers, counselors, speech therapists, and PTA parents and our mission is “to promote the acceptance of all students at Camelot, teach and give students the tools and knowledge they need to fully accept one another, and to encourage and show students how to be a friend to anyone and everyone, in all walks of life, both in and out of school.”

Each Monday of Acceptance Celebration Month, following the morning announcements, we will have a brief presentation and/or video to highlight the following important topics – Acceptance, Disability Awareness, Diversity, and Anti-Bullying. Often times, students have a hard time feeling accepted because they are different. We created our mission and designed this special month to change this and teach students to celebrate our differences. We provide lessons and activities to help students learn about those with disabilities and our diverse community (cultural, socio-economic, etc.) so that we can celebrate and teach our students to embrace.

We have created this toolkit with the schedule of the month to help support conversations and activities in the classroom, as we highlight new topics of discussion each week. We hope that you find the additional information you receive each week helpful!

We are also here to answer any further questions you may have, so please don't hesitate to reach out to any members of the Acceptance Team!

Thank you!

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Picture: ***Adapted from: Nathalie Brown, Easy Peasy Kids*

Camelot
PTA
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Acceptance; Is imagining it is you.

Think before you speak. Is this kind?

Don't use mean or nasty word to describe a person.

Would these actions or words make me feel upset or sad?

Can I be helpful here?

What would make me feel good inside?

How would I feel if someone stared or pointed at me?

Talking quietly about someone's difference doesn't mean they can't hear you.

We are all unique in our own way.



Easy Peasy Kids

www.easypeasykids.com.au

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Acceptance Celebration Month Schedule April 2018

Week/Theme	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1: April 2-6, Understanding Acceptance	Acceptance Month Staff Kick-Off Breakfast	Morning News-Understanding Acceptance/ Acceptance Wall Kick-Off	April 4th: Morning News-Buddy Bench Parent Event: Buddy Event -3:15-3:45/ Acceptance Team Open House- 4 - 4:45	Ways to be a Superhero Discussion in the Classroom	Spirit Day: Superhero Attire-to support being a hero to one another
Week 2: April 9-13, Disability Awareness	Morning News-Disability Awareness		Morning News-Prep for Walk in My Shoes/Teachers prepare students in classrooms	Walk in My Shoes Event	Spirit Day: Dress in a color representing a disability you want to support
Week 3: April 17-20, Celebrating Our Diversity	Morning News-Celebrating Our Diversity	Diversity Map-Place sticker on map where family is from with Library visit			Spirit Day: Dress in tie-dye or clothing representing native country
Week 4: April 23-27, Anti-Bullying	Morning News-Anti-Bullying				Spirit Day- Wear PINK to support Anti-Bullying

The Camelot Elementary School Acceptance Team Overview

The Camelot Elementary School formed The Acceptance Team in 2012, a group made up of administrators, teachers, staff, and PTA parents. The team was created to promote the acceptance of all students at Camelot, teach and give students the tools and knowledge they need to fully accept one another, and to encourage and show students how to be a friend to anyone and everyone, in all walks of life, both in and out of school. Funded by the PTA, the Acceptance Team meets several times during the year and accomplishes the three main parts of the Acceptance Team's mission:

Camelot Buddy Program:

This year over 130 students were paired together to be part of our Camelot Buddy Program. Students participating in the program are excused from class to attend a 30 min. Camelot Buddy activity once a month in the cafeteria. A Camelot Buddy is a student in grades 4-6 who partners with another student ("friend") and acts as a role model to this friend and other students in grades K-6. Activities are led by PTA parents and attended and supported by staff members including administrators, counselors, special education teachers and aids, and speech therapists. Activities include crafts, decorating gingerbread houses and cookies, Bingo, and a year-end special event. There is an application for the students to become a Camelot Buddy at the beginning of our school year for students in grades 4-6. The staff is given the opportunity to help find students who would be the "friends." The Assistant Principal matches students to create the partners. The Camelot Buddies attend a training session where the students are given assistance on how to be a good Buddy.

Acceptance Awareness Activities: The Acceptance Team aims to build a culture of acceptance at Camelot by educating the Camelot student body, sharing information with Camelot staff, and celebrating our differences. In the past, team members have visited classrooms across the school and talked about acceptance and various disabilities present in our school community. In the past three years, the team went from hosting a special event called "Acceptance Celebration Week" which last year became "Acceptance Celebration Month." With week long themes filled with special events and activities, this year we hope our MONTH will continue to communicate these value of acceptance to our students.

Special Education Parents Round Tables: Parents of students receiving special education services at Camelot and any parents interested in learning about special education are welcome to join this group. These meetings provide an opportunity to meet other parents at Camelot and a forum to discuss special education topics in a small group. The purpose is to build a sense of community and to show support for families interested in special education, as well as sharing information and best practices.

WEEK 1: April 2-6

Understanding Acceptance

During our first week of Acceptance Celebration Month we will be focusing on communicating to the students the importance of this school-wide event and how we will be celebrating Acceptance in many different ways. We will provide an overview of what is “Acceptance” and how we can “Celebrate Our Differences.” Please review the materials and information below to assist you in continuing these lessons in the classroom throughout the week with discussion points and activities. This toolkit is designed to help aid in discussions and help you answer questions from your students.

What is Acceptance? Follow up Discussion from Morning News-April 3

- Kids notice the slightest details about others. From the way a person looks, walks, talks and acts, they observe and learn the differences that separate us.
- But rather than see differences as divisions, kids can celebrate them, both in others and in themselves.
- How should we respond when kids ask about other people’s differences? Answer with the truth, speaking with kind and appropriate language, to their level.
- Kids mention the obvious, even those socially inappropriate. So when a child notices her classmate’s different-colored skin or disability, don’t shush her or change the subject. (That will make it seem like it’s a bad thing, a taboo.) Instead, say, “I know, isn’t she pretty?” or “I know, isn’t that cool?”

Acceptance Begins in the Home:

Acceptance is not a one off sit down lesson in class or just a topic you discuss every now and then. Acceptance is a fundamental core value that is learned and becomes an important characteristic of who you are. Teaching your children about the acceptance of all others starts with you in the home. As a parent, you are the best model and the most influential human being in your child’s life.

What language you use and how you react in situations has a major impact. That roll of the eyes and the times you think they can’t hear you filters into a child’s mind so very quickly, and in an instance an opinion whether it is good or bad is formed. Just like that. The influence we have as parents in shaping our children’s acceptance of others is nothing short of miraculous. It can supersede peer pressure, if we place a strong enough value on acceptance of another human being whatever their unique differences are. Educating children on acceptance of others and of themselves creates a sense of justice, when you have a sense of justice you create a better and kinder world.

Teaching Acceptance in the Classroom:

We can continue this very important life lesson in the classroom. Some great concepts to use with students are:

- Think before you speak. Is this kind?
- Remind kids, we are more alike than we are different.
- Don’t use mean or nasty word to describe a person. Imagine that person is you.
- People First Language: We call people by their name, not by their ability or disability.
- Role model acceptance everyday
- Read books that have a variety of different characters and cover different cultures
- Explain that differences may not be physical; Differences show up in many ways. The important factor is we are all human.
- Teach children compassion and empathy.
- Teach young children that everyone is unique.
- Teach young children differences by showing them how varied everything is in nature.
- Explain to children that everyone even thinks differently.

Camelot Buddy Bench

Follow up Discussion from Morning News-April 4



As we are in Acceptance Celebration Month at Camelot ES, we wanted to provide you information on an important part of our playground. Below is information about the Camelot Buddy Bench to talk about with your students. There is also information on how to reach a video to view in the classroom as well. We will be talking about the Buddy Bench after the morning news on Wednesday, April 4 at school as well. Thank you for taking the time to talk about this important part of our school with your students.

Buddy Bench Talking Points

What is a Buddy Bench? It's a place for making friends on our playground.

Here's how to find a friend:

- 1) You can sit on the bench and wait for someone to join you.
- 2) Kids sitting on the bench can turn to each other and invite them to play
- 3) You can sit on the bench and look to see if you can join in anywhere on the playground.
- 4) Once you make a friend you can keep inviting them to play.

Here's how to be a friend:

- 1) You can go up to a kid on the bench, smile and invite them to play.
- 2) You can look to the bench for more kids to join in your game!
- 3) Be a friend! Stay a friend!

Acceptance Activities for the Classroom

Here are several ideas of activities on acceptance for your classroom. Do one or do them all during the course of this special week.

“Acceptance Is...” (All Grades)

Have your students complete the statement “Acceptance is...” Students should be creative. They can draw a picture or write a few sentences (or both) to describe what Acceptance means to them. Have your students share with the class.

Classroom Discussion/Activity: Grades K-1

More Alike Than Different: Classroom Discussions

1. Have the class draw a picture of themselves being a friend with someone that may be different from them. They can raise hands to show the class what they created and why they love being a friend with someone who is “different”. This can be as simple as her hair is brown, and mine is blonde. Follow up questions could be around “how are you alike” and “how are you different?” Share both similarities and differences.
2. Distribute pre-printed coloring pages of some unique friendships/pairs and have the students choose a page to color. They can then write down 5 things they notice are similar and different between the two friends on the coloring page. Follow up discussion could be around how 2 friends can seem so different but still be the best of friends! (Examples: Dora & Boots, A Kitten & A Bird, Sofia & Clover, etc.)
3. Put students in pairs or small groups. Have them discuss and learn some new things about their classmate and remember ways they are alike and ways they are different. Students can then share with the class what they have learned from their classmates- highlighting their favorite similarities and favorite differences.

Classroom Discussion/Activities: Grades 2-6

Activity 1: More Alike Than Different: Poem Discussion

Read aloud or distribute the following poem to the class:

**Although I cannot walk or run,
I still believe in having fun.
While I am sitting in this chair,
My mind goes racing everywhere.**

**So stop and smile and talk with me,
And you will very quickly see
That I enjoy jokes, games and toys,
And meeting other girls and boys.**

Classroom Discussion: Ask aloud or in small groups the following questions. You can also have the class break into pairs.

- What do you notice is different about you than the child in the poem? (eg. The child in the poem is in a wheelchair)
- What do you notice is the same about you and the child in the poem? (eg. likes having fun, jokes, games and toys)
- How does the child in the poem say they want you to treat them? (eg. to be their friend)
- What did you learn from this discussion? (eg. how I can be a better friend to those that may be different from you)

Activity 2: Put-Ups (www.tolerance.org)

Students are used to put-downs, but what about put-ups? This activity helps students see the positive things that their schoolmates are doing and gives them skills to affirm each other across social boundaries.

Ask students if they know what a put-down is and list common put-downs they hear on the board. Next, ask them if they know what a put-up is and give some examples by giving students in your class some put-ups. Examples:

“I notice that Myranda always has a smile on her face and is ready to help anyone with anything at all.”

“I really love how Augustine always reminds all of us to turn out the light when we leave the room.”

(Continued on next page)

Use the following poem to introduce to young children how people are always watching what they do:

*I am my schoolmate's reader
He reads me when we meet
Today he reads me in my class
Tomorrow on the streets
He may be classmate or friend
Or slight acquaintance be
He may not even know me
But he is reading me!*

Inform students that they are going to begin “reading” each other, finding positive things schoolmates are doing and giving each other put-ups. To make it easy for students to praise each other, they can use sticky notes as Put-Up slips.

Encourage students in your class to “put-up” students in the grades below them so as to model good behavior to younger schoolmates. Likewise, encourage them to cross boundaries and offer put-ups to older students and adults in the school so that others can see that they are modeling good behavior to younger schoolmates. This lets them see that they can cross social boundaries of grades and age and make a positive impact on the entire school.

Continuing this Exercise:

Have a special time during the day when students can offer each other put-ups. Make this a classroom ritual. Make visits to other classes where your students give put-ups to others not in their class.

Make an in-class bulletin board of the “I am my classmate’s reader” poem and hang all of the put-ups there for everyone to see. Even better, make the hallway bulletin board a place where the whole community can see the put-ups!

SuperHero Classroom Activity (All Grades)

**Lead Discussion About 10 Ways You Can Be a SuperHero at Camelot
Encourage Students to Dress Like A Superhero on Friday, April 6**

This Supports our Message to be a Superhero to One Another-Be a Friend.

**Even though we are all different, you can be a friend to anybody and everybody.
EVERYONE needs friends.**

1. Say “Hi” to a new friend in the hallway at school.

2. Sit next to a new friend in the classroom.

3. When it’s time find a partner, pick a new friend.

4. Play with a new friend at recess.

5. Start a conversation with a new friend or ask them questions.

6. Sit next to a new friend at lunch and talk to them.

7. Do not tease or laugh at your new friend.

8. Invite your new friend on a playdate or to your birthday party.

9. Talk to your new friend at activities outside of class like at school or sports event and club meetings.

10. Introduce your new friend to your friends.

