

Our Friendship Chain Links Us Together



Relationship Building

Grade(s) K-3

learning objective/s or description

Students listen to a friendship song, brainstorm and dictate qualities of a good friend, and draw their friends on paper links that get connected into a class Friendship Chain, finishing with a shared Friendship Poem or Chant.

materials needed:

- Song about friendship, e.g. “Glad to Have a Friend Like You” from the CD *Free to Be You and Me* by Marlo Thomas and Friends
- Colored paper
- Tape, colored pencils
- Crayons, stapler

Any tips or important information

Plan to make duplicate colored strips so every child can have one. Hang the chain somewhere visible — you’ll refer back to it throughout the year.

lesson structure:

1. **Opening Circle:** Gather students in a circle and ask: “What does a good friend do?” Go around and let each child share. Their answers will surface many of the friendship words the lesson will later collect on the colored strips.
2. **Community Builder — Friend Connection:** Students stand in a circle holding hands. The leader gently squeezes the hand of the student next to them. That squeeze travels around the circle, one student to the next, until it returns. Try a few rounds and reverse directions. The circle only works because every friend passes it on — the perfect physical preview of the friendship chain.

Setup

1. Pre-cut 12" × 3" white construction paper strips (1 for each student and teacher in the class).

2. Pre-cut 12" x 3" colored construction paper strips (1 for each student and teacher in the class; evenly distributed by color and mixed up).
3. Tape, crayons, and colored pencils.
4. Chart pocket holder, black marker, and stapler.

Step 1: Gather students together for a group discussion. Ask them who their friends are and what they do together. Explain that you're going to play a song about friends and they need to listen carefully because at the end of the song, you're going to ask them to tell you some of the things friends do together. Play a song about friendship. I like to play "Glad to Have a Friend Like You" from the CD Free to Be You and Me by Marlo Thomas and Friends. Ask the children to share what they heard.

Step 2: Explain to the students that in order to do all these things they discussed, friends have to behave or act a certain way. Tell them that in your class you're all friends and that means behaving in a friendly way. Ask the children to tell you some of the qualities a person needs to have to be a friend, and that you will be recording the powerful "friendship" words they share. Write these on the colored strips, using the six different colors. Some words that could be generated are: share, be nice, respectful, helpful, take turns, play together, listen, get along, give presents, hold hands, give hugs, kind, etc. Accept all answers. After you write the words, place the strips in the pocket chart. While children are completing the next step, you may need to make duplicate strips so that each child will have one later.

Step 3: Explain that the class will be making a Friendship Chain from the words they shared to remind everyone all year how a good friend behaves. Distribute a white construction paper strip to students and ask them to draw a picture of themselves doing something with a friend. After they finish their drawings, show them how they can bend their strips to make a circle and tape the ends together to make a link.

Step 4: As children gather back together, have them share their illustration and select a "friendship" word from the colored strips in the pocket chart from Step 2.

Step 5: When they're finished, invite students to create small groups with others that have the same color strips.

Step 6: Call one color group up at a time and use the students' colored strips to staple a link and join the students' white strips together. If you call the groups in this order: purple, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red, you will have a chain that also shows the graduating colors of the rainbow.

Step 7: When all the links are together, hang the class Friendship Chain in a place where it can be referred to all year long. Let the children know that by making the chain together, the whole class is showing what good friends do best: cooperate! Post a sign by the chain that reads, "Our Friendship Chain Links Us All Together."

3. **Closing Circle:** Bring children back together in front of the Friendship Chain and ask: "Who is one friend in this room you want to play with today?" Invite

each child to share — it can be someone whose drawing they liked, who said something kind, or who they want to get to know better.