



PURPOSE

To help students understand that giving of themselves is the ultimate way to respect their own and others' human dignity.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

1. Distinguish examples of giving from using.
2. Recognize giving, versus using, as respectful of human dignity.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES

- ***A Gift of Thanks*** template (see Materials)
- Supplemental materials:
 - ***Heroes Tribute: Jorge Munoz, CNN*** video (<https://youtu.be/WOsK89NFLLM?t=1m28s>)
 - ***The Angel of Queens, KarmaTube*** video (<http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=1606>)

VOCABULARY

- **self-gift:** sharing one's self with another without expecting anything in return
- **use:** to do something for our own purpose
- **kindness:** being friendly or considerate
- **generosity:** being willing to give more of something, such as time or money, than is expected

PROCEDURE

Step 1: Review the previous lessons. Ask volunteers to report on their small act of kindness, then ask: How did it require your power to choose? What sort of effect did your act have on your emotions? Was your act easy or hard?

Step 2: Introduce the difference between giving and using.

Explain: We give of ourselves when we show respect for another person's human dignity—for example, when we give a hug to our friend who fell during recess and hurt her knee. We *use* other

people when we do something in order to achieve our own purpose—for example, when we try to be friends with someone only because they share their candy with us during lunch.

Divide the classroom into two sections—the “Gift” and the “Use” sections. Explain to the students that you will read a list of actions, and they should stand in the “Gift” section if the action is an example of self-gift, or in the “Use” section if the action is an example of use.

- always letting another student take the first place in line [gift]
- calling your grandma on her birthday [gift]
- pretending to be another person’s friend so they choose you for their kickball team [use]
- bringing your teacher an apple [gift]
- stealing another person’s pencil [use]
- apologizing for a mistake [gift]
- telling our parents how much we love them [gift]
- doing something just to get another person’s attention [use]

With each action called, pause to ask students:

- Why did you choose “gift” or “use”?
- Does this action show respect for your human dignity? Why or why not?
- Does this action show respect for the other person’s dignity? Why or why not?

Explain: The best way to respect our own dignity, and the dignity of other people, is to give ourselves—to share ourselves without expecting anything in return. This recognizes the dignity they have. Because each person has human dignity (including ourselves!), we are worthy of being loved and are gifts for each other.

Step 3: Help students give of themselves in respect of theirs and another’s human dignity.

Hand each student one *A Gift of Thanks* template. Ask them to choose one person they want to thank, and the specific thing for which they want to extend their thanks, and to color in the squares as a gift that they will give away. Once they are done coloring, they can cut out the shape and tape together their gift box.

Step 4: Summarize: Today we have taken the next step in understanding what respect for human dignity actually looks like in our relationships and encounters with others. This respect is always a gift given and received in our encounters, and one way by which we give it ourselves is by giving of ourselves while showing others in our life generosity and kindness.

FOLLOW-UP & HOMEWORK

Ask students to give of themselves by giving away their boxes of thanks.

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplement 1: Share the story of “the Angel of Queens” to showcase a life of heroic kindness and generosity.

Show the [Heroes Tribute: Jorge Munoz, CNN](#) video to start then summarize:

Jorge Munoz lives in Queens, New York. In the early mornings, he rises to work as a school bus driver. One morning, while driving the school bus, he saw a group of unemployed men on a street corner in Queens, New York, who would go hungry if they were unable to find work—and he realized he could help them by bringing them food.

He decided to draw his entire family into an undertaking that has resulted in work he calls his “second job,” work that has him considered a local hero. Every day, his family makes food to serve the homeless in Queens—setting aside family funds and time to make possible this service. He has served 70,000 meals and counting through his work.

Supplemental Activity:

Show [The Angel of Queens, KarmaTube](#) video for more context, if time permits.

Discussion questions:

1. How does Jorge give of himself?
2. What are ways we can imitate his generosity and kindness?



Human
Dignity
Curriculum

A GIFT OF THANKS

