

AKAHAI LESSON PLAN

3-6

Purpose

- Provide attentional training strategies in the direction of kindness/empathy to strengthen the prefrontal cortex and facilitate brain integration (amygdala, hippocampus, frontal cortex, etc.), heart and body.
- Foster students' ability to think, speak, and to act kindly toward oneself, others, and the aina.
- Improve students' physical, mental, and emotional well-being so they may thrive throughout their lives.
- Deepen student's understanding and awareness of diversity and others perspectives.

Objectives

- Empower students with a research-based, socio-emotional tool (kindness, empathy, compassion) that is grounded in the aloha value, Akahai.
- Develop students' growth mindset and resiliency skills by practicing akahai.
- Strengthen socio-emotional learning (self-awareness/self-regulation/skillful behavioral choices) with akahai.

Learning Skill Icon



Motor Skills



Listening Skills



Cognitive Skills



Language Skills



Literacy Skills



Emotional Skills



Communication Skills



Social Skills



Problem-solving Skills



Creative Skills



Environmental Awareness



Hand-eye Coordination

Literal Meaning of Book & Introducing Akahai Practice

Invite students to explore the literal meaning of the words in the book.

- What do the words represent – the different animals.
- May even explore and name the emotions expressed by each characters in the story (e.g., Kopiana – afraid, scared), expanding emotional vocabulary.

Activities

#1 Introduce song, drawing, or coloring of the different animals

- ☑ In this activity students will strengthen their cognitive skills by having to think, remember and pay attention to a song taught to them. Fine motor activities are strengthened by drawing different animals.

#2 Puzzle

- ☑ Puzzle play is a great time to build cognitive and fine motor skills, but it can also be a time to build social, emotional, and language skills.

1. Using pre-made puzzles, assemble the pieces to create the pictures of animals from the book.

Moral Meaning of Book & Introducing Akahai Practice

- Ask students to reflect on what is the message behind the book?
What is it trying to say?
- Explore different types of kindness (thought/intention, speech, action) and direction (to self, to others, to aina). How did Keiki in the story express this?
- Explore when kindness would be helpful in their own lives.
- Connect how mindful aloha breath can help one to be kind.
 - By taking a moment to connect with one's loving heart/intention

Activities

#1 Kindness means ...

- ☑ Being a reflective learner involves making learning a more conscious process. It helps students to become an active learner by asking questions and thinking critically about their own ideas.

#2 Make a list or draw acts of akahai

1. Draw acts of akahai that they would do for themselves, for others, for the aina
2. Go around and have students share one of their drawings.

Learning Skills



Learning Skills



Learning Skills



Learning Skills



Learning Skills



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Learning Skills



#3 Do a drawing or write something nice to give to another

☑ In this activity students can either create a list or draw pictures of akahai acts. A list is useful because it removes the cognitive load of having to remember things. A list of things you might do is useful because you no longer have to keep them in mind, and hence you can think about more details.

#4 :Introduce Kindness phrase in Hawaiian

- Mahalo/Mahalo nui/Mahalo nui loa -Thanks/Much Thanks/Thanks very much
- E Kala Mai - Excuse me

Metaphorical Meaning of Book & Introducing Akahai Practice

- How can the book lesson be applied creatively, in your own daily lives?
- Reflection: connect to their own lives/situations – when have you been kind?
- Practicing kindness means being grateful for others/situations/opportunities that allow you to practice and reinforce kindness, thereby growing kindness seeds within you.

Activities

#1 Planting kindness seeds

☑ Students participate in learning when engaging all their senses. With gardening, kids can touch and feel the soil, seeds, and aina, thereby increasing environmental awareness. They can smell the plants; they can see the growth and differences in plants. Allowing all the senses to be involved helps kids understand and grasp the concept of gardening along with all the math and scientific concepts that go along with it.

1. Metaphorically, engage in a planting activity with students using seeds and either in pots or in the ground.
2. First, giving thanks/gratitude to the aina. Appreciating the seeds you have in your hand (remembering where it came from).
3. Being slow and gentle, with mindfulness, plant the seeds.
4. Connect the planting activity with planting wholesome, kind seeds in the mind.

#2 Growing empathy

☑ Role playing allows children to act out and make sense of real-life situations. Children learn to empathize with others; taking part in a role play activity has students taking on the role of characters from the book, which will foster empathy.

1. Metaphorically, engage in role play activity of the different animals. (e.g., Kopianna looking scare; pueo looking lost). Show different emotions on faces and bodies. How do you know that Kopianna is scared? How does feeling scare look like on your face? How does your body feel? How does feeling look like on nene's face? How does nene act when its mindless? How does that look like on your face?
2. Encourage students to engage in a friendly, charitable way to understand others. Empathy helps kindness seed to grow.

‘Ōlelo No`eau./ mo’olelo

He keiki aloha nā mea kanu.

Beloved children are the plants.

Transcendent Meaning of Akahai/Kindness

- How does the book point to what lies beyond text?
- How is being kind to others is a reflection of gratitude to others/to aina?

‘Ōlelo No`eau./ mo’olelo

‘O Ka ‘olu ‘olu e hau ‘oli ia.

Happiness is Kindness.

Kindness/Empathy Practice

- Encourage students to engage in at least 1-2 acts of kindness each day, to grow the kindness seeds. It can be very simple, no need to be complicated.
- Reinforce with Aloha Breath. With the next breath, invite students to breath in kindness, and to breath out kindness. Repeat this three times.
 - “Like washing your hands, you are washing the mind each time you remember to do aloha breath, washing the mind with kindness, with aloha.”

Activity

#1 My own Akahai backpack

☑ Creative play is a vital part of childhood and child development. Through creative and imaginative play children can grow emotionally, socially, intellectually, and even physically. Creative experiences help child develop these skills and enable them to share their thoughts, feeling, and ideas.

1. Find one item to include into a bag, which they can use to show akahai.
2. Make a group and share how these items in their bag can be used for Akahai.

Activity Assessment

Assess the extent to which students understand akahai, kindness – how to practice, why do it, and where and when they can do it. Inquire also how akahai/kindness can help their family, community, and aina.

Reflection

These lessons are intended to go along with the story, but they can also be adapted/used anytime. For example, students can pause and “take 3 deep aloha breaths, breathing in kindness...breathing out kindness.

Learning Skills

