ABOUT TEAMBUILDERS
Beginning-of-the-year Teambuilder activities give the students a chance to learn one another’s names and to get to know something about one another. Overall, Teambuilders:

- Help students begin to appreciate one another
- Bring students together around a common purpose
- Help students develop a sense of belonging and acceptance

Do Teambuilder activities early in the year, as well as periodically throughout the year, such as when students switch to new groups, when new students enter the class, and after school vacations.

Over the next five weeks, the students will participate in Teambuilders to get to know one another. These include: “Clapping Names” and “Rhythm Name Game,” in which the students use chants to learn one another’s names; “Favorite Things,” in which partners ask one another questions about their favorite things; “Things You Do,” in which the students talk to several different partners about things they like to do; “Your Home,” in which the students talk to several different partners about their families and homes; and “Tea Party,” in which pairs talk about themselves with other pairs.

Lesson Purpose
Students:
- Learn one another’s names
- Listen to one another
- Speak clearly

Materials
- Space for the class to sit in a circle
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

The Lesson

1. **INTRODUCE GATHERING IN A CIRCLE**

   Explain that over the next several weeks, the students will participate in several Teambuilder activities to get to know one another better. These activities will help them learn one another’s names and begin to build a classroom community in which everyone feels safe and comfortable. Explain that today the students will sit in a circle and learn one another’s names.

   Explain and model how you would like the students to get into a circle. (For example, “When I point to your table, you will quietly get up, walk to the rug, and sit on your bottom around the edge of the rug.”)

   Have the students move to the circle. If necessary, have them return to their desks and practice the procedure again until they are able to move in an orderly way.

2. **PLAY CLAPPING NAMES**

   Explain that today the students will play a game to help them learn one another’s names. Explain that in this game one person in the circle will say her name, and then the whole class will say the name and clap out the syllables together. Model with your own name, saying clearly, “My name is ____.” Repeat your name, clapping once for each syllable. Repeat your name again and have the class chant and clap. Remind the students to listen when other people are talking and to speak loudly and clearly when it is their turn so that everyone can hear. Start the game and go around the circle.

   **Student:** “My name is Jeremiah.”

   **Class:** “Jer — e — mi — ah!”

   ![Clap!](Clap.png) ![Clap!](Clap.png) ![Clap!](Clap.png) ![Clap!](Clap.png)

   Make the activity more challenging by including first and last names. To add variety to the activity, walk behind the students while they are seated in the circle and randomly tap individual students to say their name. Have the group clap and respond in unison. Continue to tap individual students until every student has had a turn.
3 REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY

Remind the students that learning one another’s names will help to build their community. Help the students think about how they listened during the activity. Offer your own observations. (For example, “I noticed that most people listened when people were sharing their names. Listening to one another makes everyone feel like they are a special part of our community.”)

Let the students know that they will have many chances to share in the circle this year. Explain and model how you would like them to move from the circle. Adjourn the activity and have the students return to their seats. If necessary, have them practice the procedure until they are able to move in an orderly way.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

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GRADES K–1

Clapping Names

Materials
• Space for the class to sit in a circle

Lesson Purpose
Students:
• Learn one another's names
• Listen to one another
• Speak clearly

ABOUT TEAMBUILDERS

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• Help students begin to appreciate one another
• Bring students together around a common purpose
• Help students develop a sense of belonging and acceptance

Do Teambuilder activities early in the year, as well as periodically throughout the year, such as when students switch to new groups, when new students enter the class, and after school vacations.

Over the next five weeks, the students will participate in Teambuilders to get to know one another. These include: “Clapping Names” and “Rhythm Name Game,” in which the students use chants to learn one another's names; “Favorite Things,” in which partners ask one another questions about their favorite things; “Things You Do,” in which the students talk to several different partners about things they like to do; “Your Home,” in which the students talk to several different partners about their families and homes; and “Tea Party,” in which pairs talk about themselves with other pairs.
Rhythm Name Game

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Learn one another’s names
- Listen to one another
- Speak clearly

Materials
- Space for the class to sit in a circle

The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE

Explain that today the students will sit in a circle and play another game to help them learn one another’s names. Remind them that earlier this week, they learned how to walk to the rug and sit in a circle. Review your expectations for how they will move. (For example, “When I point to your table, you will quietly get up, walk to the rug, and sit on your bottom around the edge of the rug.”)

Have the students move to the circle. If necessary, have them return to their desks and practice the procedure again until they are able to move in an orderly way.

Note:
Have a student volunteer model how to move to and sit in the circle before having the class move.
2 PLAY THE RHYTHM NAME GAME

Explain that the students will continue to learn one another’s names by playing a game called the “Rhythm Name Game.” Begin clapping a simple 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4 rhythm. Encourage the students to join in. Once the beat is established, demonstrate the chant using your name.

CHANT: “Say your first name loud and clear.
    We’ll say it back so we all can hear.”
YOU: “[Midge]!”
CLASS: “[Midge]!”

Once the students have learned the chant, have them practice with you. For example:

TOGETHER: “Say your first name loud and clear.”
    Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap!
    “We’ll say it back so we all can hear.”
    Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap!

STUDENT: “Bonnie!”
    Clap! Clap!

CLASS: “Bonnie!”
    Clap! Clap!
EXPLAIN THAT THE STUDENTS WILL GO AROUND THE CIRCLE AND TAKE Turner saying their names. Ask and briefly discuss:

**Q** How will you make sure everyone will be able to hear your name?

Remind the students to listen carefully when other people say their names. Start the game and go all around the circle.

**REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY**

Ask and briefly discuss:

**Q** What did you like about today’s activity?

**Q** If you are not able to hear others when they talk in the circle, what can you say to your classmates?

Have two or three students share with the group.

Let the students know they will continue to learn one another’s names and get to know one another better through Teambuilder activities.

Explain how you would like the students to move from the circle. Adjourn the activity and have them return to their seats. If necessary, have them practice the procedure until they are able to move in an orderly way.

**Note:**

Vary the chant by using snaps or knee slaps instead of claps. Make the activity more challenging by changing the rhythm to add last names.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

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Rhythm

Name Game

Materials
• Space for the class to sit in a circle

The Lesson

GATHER IN A CIRCLE

Explain that today the students will sit in a circle and play another game to help them learn one another’s names. Remind them that earlier this week, they learned how to walk to the rug and sit in a circle. Review your expectations for how they will move. (For example, “When I point to your table, you will quietly get up, walk to the rug, and sit on your bottom around the edge of the rug.”)

Have the students move to the circle. If necessary, have them return to their desks and practice the procedure again until they are able to move in an orderly way.

Lesson Purpose

Students:
• Learn one another’s names
• Listen to one another
• Speak clearly

Have a student volunteer model how to move to and sit in the circle before having the class move.

1 Week 1 Lesson 2
Favorite Things

Lesson Purpose
Students:
- Learn and practice “Turn to Your Partner”

The Lesson

1 ASSIGN PARTNERS AND GATHER IN A CIRCLE
Randomly assign partners and make sure they know each other’s names. (For suggestions on assigning partners, see the CSC Overview, p. 25.) Explain that the students will get into a circle again today. Remind them how to get into a circle, as well as your expectations for how they will move. Have them move to the circle with partners sitting together. If necessary, have them return to their desks and practice the procedure again.

2 TEACH “TURN TO YOUR PARTNER”
Tell the students that today, and throughout the year, you will stop and ask them to turn to a partner and talk. Explain that talking to a partner gives everyone a chance to share their ideas with someone before sharing with the class. (For more information about the role of cooperative structures in social development, see the CSC Overview, p. 19.)

Materials
- Space for the class to sit in a circle

Cooperative structures such as “Turn to Your Partner” increase students’ participation, make students accountable, and create a cooperative environment in the classroom. Use cooperative structures to increase student interaction during lessons across the school day.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

Explain the “Turn to Your Partner” procedure. (For example, “When I say ‘Turn to your partner,’ you will turn to face your partner and start talking about a question that I ask. When I raise my hand, you will finish what you’re saying, raise your own hand, and turn back to face me.”) Explain that you expect the students to listen carefully when their partner is talking and to take turns talking and listening.

3 MODEL “TURN TO YOUR PARTNER”

With a student acting as your partner, model turning to face each other. Ask the students to turn and face their partner. Give the signal, and have partners turn back and face you. If necessary, have the students practice the procedure again.

Again, model “Turn to Your Partner” with your student partner, and this time, add sharing. Turn to your partner and say your first and last names. Have your partner say her first and last names. Give the signal, and both turn back to the class.

4 USE “TURN TO YOUR PARTNER” TO TALK ABOUT FAVORITE THINGS

Have the class practice “Turn to Your Partner.” Ask:

Q What is your favorite color?

Say “Turn to your partner” and have the students turn and tell each other their favorite color. After a moment, give the signal to bring the students’ attention back to you. Have a few students share their favorite color with the class.

Practice “Turn to Your Partner” again by asking:

Q What is your favorite animal?
Say “Turn to your partner” and follow the same procedure as before. This time, after partners share, have a few volunteers share their partner’s favorite animal with the class.

Continue to use “Turn to Your Partner” to have the students discuss other favorite things with their partner and the group. You might ask:

Q What is your favorite fruit?

Q What is your favorite toy?

**REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY**

Ask and briefly discuss questions such as:

Q What did your partner do that helped you work well together?

Q What did you do that helped you and your partner work well together?

Q What could you do differently the next time you work with a partner?

Let the students know they will have many chances to practice “Turn to Your Partner” with other classmates this year.

Explain how you would like the students to move from the circle. Adjourn the activity and have them return to their seats. If necessary, have them practice the procedure until they are able to move in an orderly way.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

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GRADES K–1

Favorite Things

Materials

• Space for the class to sit in a circle

The Lesson

ASSIGN PARTNERS AND GATHER IN A CIRCLE

Randomly assign partners and make sure they know each other's names. (For suggestions on assigning partners, see the CSC Overview, p. 25.) Explain that the students will get into a circle again today. Remind them how to get into a circle, as well as your expectations for how they will move. Have them move to the circle with partners sitting together. If necessary, have them return to their desks and practice the procedure again.

TEACH "TURN TO YOUR PARTNER"

Tell the students that today, and throughout the year, you will stop and ask them to turn to a partner and talk. Explain that talking to a partner gives everyone a chance to share their ideas with someone before sharing with the class. (For more information about the role of cooperative structures in social development, see the CSC Overview, p. 19.)

Lesson Purpose

Students:

• Learn and practice "Turn to Your Partner"

Cooperative structures such as "Turn to Your Partner" increase students' participation, make students accountable, and create a cooperative environment in the classroom. Use cooperative structures to increase student interaction during lessons across the school day.

Week 2

Lesson 1
Introducing Class Meetings

ABOUT CHECK-IN CLASS MEETINGS

In the Caring School Community program, students participate in various types of class meetings: Check-in Class Meetings, Planning/Decision-Making Class Meetings, and Problem-Solving Class Meetings.

In the beginning of the year, many class meetings are check-in meetings. The purpose of Check-in Class Meetings is to give the students a chance to reflect on their day. In these meetings, the students’ commitment to the classroom community is enhanced. They have opportunities to celebrate what they have learned, evaluate how they have worked together, or share their thoughts about their day. Allow 10–15 minutes, preferably near the end of the day, for check-in meetings. To build a sense of belonging among your students, plan to do a Check-in Class Meeting every day.

At this first class meeting of the year, the emphasis is on establishing class meeting rules, teaching the procedures for class meetings, and helping students get used to talking in class meetings. A model for subsequent daily Check-in Class Meetings, along with ideas for check-in topics, is provided in Week 3 in the Model Daily Check-in.

Lesson Purpose

Students:

- Learn and practice class meeting rules and procedures
- Take turns talking
- Listen to others
- Practice “Turn to Your Partner”

Materials

- “Class Meeting Rules” chart, prepared ahead (see “Before the Lesson”)
- Space for the class to sit in a circle
**BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON**

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**Before the Lesson**

Prepare and post a chart of “Class Meeting Rules” for the students to follow during all class meetings. Consider using or adapting the following rules:

- One person talks at a time.
- Look at the person talking.
- When mentioning problems, refer to “people” instead of using names.

Decide on a procedure for having the students form a circle for all class meetings. Establishing and reviewing this procedure will help class meetings proceed smoothly.

---

**The Lesson**

1. **INTRODUCE CLASS MEETINGS AND GATHER IN A CIRCLE**

   Explain that this year the students will regularly come together in class meetings. Class meetings are a special kind of discussion in which students will sit in a circle and talk about their classroom community. The purpose is to learn how to work well together so that everyone in the class feels safe and comfortable. Explain that today they will form a circle to have their first class meeting of the year.

   Explain how you would like the students to move into a circle and remind them to move safely and responsibly.

   Have the students move to the circle with partners sitting together. If necessary, have them return to their desks and practice the procedure again until they are able to move in an orderly way.

   Point out ways in which they took responsibility for themselves as they were moving. Explain that it is important for them to move responsibly to the circle every time they have a class meeting.
2 **TEACH THE CLASS MEETING RULES**

Explain that there are rules you expect the students to follow during class meetings so that everyone will feel safe participating. Show the “Class Meeting Rules” chart and briefly explain each rule.

As you explain each rule, ask questions like these to help the students think about why the rule is important:

**Q** What would happen if everyone talked at the same time in a class meeting?

**Q** Why is it important to look at the person who’s talking?

*Students might say:*

> “You wouldn’t get to hear what anyone was saying.”
> “If you look at the person who’s talking, it will help you listen.”

Explain that today the students will practice the first two of the class meeting rules. Remind the students to talk one at a time and to look at the person speaking. If necessary, model this with a student. Explain that you will check in with them at the end of the meeting to see how they did.

3 **SHARE IN THE CIRCLE AND PRACTICE LOOKING AT THE PERSON TALKING**

Explain that today in the class meeting, the students will get to know one another by sharing news about their day. Ask:

**Q** What is one thing you did in school today that you want to tell your family about?

Provide the students with a few moments of “wait time” to think before you call on anyone to respond. Have several volunteers share their ideas with the class.

Help the students explain their thinking in more detail by asking the following questions. Remind the students to look at and listen to the person speaking.

The Lesson

- **BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON**
- **IN A CIRCLE**
- **INTRODUCE CLASS MEETINGS AND GATHER**
- **Help class meetings proceed smoothly.**
- **All class meetings.** Establishing and reviewing this procedure will again until they are able to move in an orderly way.
- **Together.** If necessary, have them return to their desks and practice and remind them to move safely and responsibly.

Today they will form a circle to have their first class meeting of which students will sit in a circle and talk about their classroom community. The purpose is to learn how to work well together so that everyone in the class feels safe and comfortable. Explain that this year the students will regularly come together in class meetings. Class meetings are a special kind of discussion in which students will sit in a circle and talk about their classroom community.

Explain that there are rules you expect the students to follow during class meetings so that everyone will feel safe participating. Show the “Class Meeting Rules” chart and briefly explain each rule.

As you explain each rule, ask questions like these to help the students think about why the rule is important:

**Q** What would happen if everyone talked at the same time in a class meeting?

**Q** Why is it important to look at the person who’s talking?

*Students might say:*

> “You wouldn’t get to hear what anyone was saying.”
> “If you look at the person who’s talking, it will help you listen.”

Explain that today the students will practice the first two of the class meeting rules. Remind the students to talk one at a time and to look at the person speaking. If necessary, model this with a student. Explain that you will check in with them at the end of the meeting to see how they did.

**Note: if the students have difficulty generating ideas, offer some suggestions such as those in “Students might say.”**

Giving the students a few seconds of quiet “wait time” before discussing a question allows them time to consider the question and form a response before anyone starts talking. It increases student participation in discussions and encourages longer, more thoughtful answers. Use wait time during all student discussions throughout the day.
Ask:

Q  Who else liked [making self-portraits] today? What part did you like about it, and why?

Q  What will you want to tell your family tonight about [making self-portraits]?

4 REFLECT ON THE MEETING

Remind the students that they have been practicing turning and talking to a partner. Review the procedure for “Turn to Your Partner.” (For example, “When I say 'Turn to your partner,' you will turn to face your partner and start talking about the question I ask. When I raise my hand, finish what you are saying, raise your own hand, and turn back to face me.”) Explain that in addition to listening carefully to their partner you expect the students to explain their thinking clearly and completely. Ask:

Q  I noticed people listening carefully and looking at the person who was talking during our meeting. Why is it important to listen to the person talking?

Use “Turn to Your Partner” to have partners discuss the question. After a moment, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have two or three volunteers share their thinking with the class.

5 ADJOURN THE MEETING

Explain how you would like the students to move from the circle. Adjourn the meeting and have them return to their seats. If necessary, have them practice the procedure until they are able to move in an orderly way.

After the Lesson

Save the “Class Meeting Rules” chart for use throughout the year.
Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Reflect on the values of fairness and helpfulness
- Practice “Turn to Your Partner”

Before the Lesson

At the beginning of the week, explain that you would like the students to think about ways in which they can be fair and helpful to one another at school. In the days before the class meeting, stop the class periodically to point out ways the students are being fair and helpful. (For example, “Martha and Julia are taking turns using the red paint to make their art project. That is a very fair way to act. I saw Joshua and Lisa clean up water that spilled on the floor. That was helpful.”) You may want to keep notes about your observations for use in the class meeting. Pointing out examples of fairness and helpfulness as they happen helps to define the values and increases the students’ awareness and understanding of them.
The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE

Explain that today the students will have a class meeting to talk with their partner about how they were fair and helpful to one another this week and to think of other ways to be fair and helpful in school. Remind the students how to move to the circle responsibly and have several pairs model the procedure. Ask:

Q I noticed that the partners walked slowly to the circle. What are some other ways they were responsible when they moved to the circle?

Students might say:

“They didn’t bump into each other.”

“They moved quietly.”

Have one or two students share what they noticed and have the rest of the class move to the circle with partners sitting together.

2 REVIEW CLASS MEETING RULES

Briefly review the class meeting rules with the students. (For example, “When we have a class meeting, it’s important to remember to look at the person who’s talking. What other things do you want to remember to do to show others that you are listening?”)
3 DISCUSS WAYS THE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN FAIR AND HELPFUL

Remind the students that over the week you have been pointing out ways that they have been fair and helpful to one another. Begin a discussion about their use of the values by asking:

Q What were some ways you were fair to one another during [snack time]?

Q What were some ways you were helpful to one another during [today’s art lesson]?

Provide the students with a few moments of wait time to think before you call on anyone to respond. Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class.

DISCUSS OTHER WAYS TO BE FAIR AND HELPFUL

Explain that today the students will talk with their partner about other ways to be fair and helpful. Remind them that they have been practicing “Turn to Your Partner.” If necessary, review the procedure. Use “Turn to Your Partner” to discuss:

Q If you arrived at school tomorrow morning and you saw a new student in our class, what could you do to help that student?

After a moment, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have two or three volunteers share their thinking with the class. Use “Turn to Your Partner” again to discuss:

Q How could you be fair on the playground when there are a lot of people who want to play on the monkey bars?
After another moment, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have two or three volunteers share their thinking with the class. Help them think about why it’s important to be fair and helpful by asking follow-up questions, such as:

Q  [Martin said he would help a new student by showing her where to put her things and where to sit.] Why is it good to help a student who is new to our class?

Q  [Sandi said she could be fair on the playground by taking turns using the monkey bars.] How would that make the playground a better place to be for everyone?

**REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY**

Encourage the students to keep thinking about ways they can be fair and helpful to their classmates. Let them know that you will check in with them throughout the year to see how they are doing building a community in which everyone is fair and helpful.

**ADJOURN THE MEETING**

Remind the students how you would like them to move from the circle. Adjourn the meeting and have them return to their seats.

**After the Lesson**

As the students work together on various activities during the rest of this week, stop periodically and ask, “How are you being fair or helpful right now?” Pointing out how they are being fair and helpful provides the students with concrete examples of the values and helps them identify situations in which they can use these values to guide their behavior.
Things You Do

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Get to know one another
- Take responsibility for themselves
- Take turns

Before the Lesson

In this lesson, you will use animal cards to partner students. Prior to the lesson, photocopy and cut out enough pairs of cards for your class. (For example, if you have 20 students, you will need ten pairs of animal cards.) Each student will use his or her animal card to find a classmate with the matching card.

The Lesson

1. **GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY**
   Have the students gather in a circle. Explain that today they will each find a partner by using animal cards. Then partners will have time to talk to and get to know each other.

2. **DISTRIBUTE CARDS AND FIND PARTNERS**
   Distribute one animal card to each student. Have each student hold the card in his or her lap so the animal side is up. Explain that students with the same animal on their cards will be partners. Have a student sitting next to you hold her card overhead so that everyone can see the animal side. Ask, “Who has the same animal on their card?” Have the student with the matching card walk over and sit facing his partner.

Materials

- Class Meeting Animal Cards for random pairing (see “Before the Lesson” and the blackline master pages 39–42 in the CSC Overview)

If you have an odd number of students, take a card and act as a student’s partner for the purposes of pairing. Once everyone is paired, have your partner join another pair to make a trio.
Have another student in the circle hold up her card and repeat the pairing procedure. Continue until all the students are paired. Have the pairs spread out around the room so that partners can hear one another.

3 TALK IN PAIRS ABOUT WHAT THEY DO TO GET READY FOR SCHOOL

Have the students introduce themselves to their partner. Use “Turn to Your Partner” to discuss the following questions. If necessary, review the “Turn to Your Partner” procedure. Encourage the students to listen carefully when their partner is talking and to take turns talking and listening. They should be ready to tell the class something they learn about their partner. Ask:

Q  What do you do to get ready for school in the morning?

After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Ask:

Q  What is something your partner does to get ready for school in the morning?

Have two or three students share what their partner does to get ready for school.

4 FIND NEW PARTNERS AND TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY LIKE TO DO AFTER SCHOOL

Have the students return to the circle. Collect and redistribute the animal cards. Explain that they will use the cards to find new partners. Repeat the procedure described above for finding partners. Have the students introduce themselves to their new partner. Use “Turn to Your Partner” to discuss:

Q  What do you like to do after school?
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

Class Meeting Lessons

Explain that the students should be ready to tell the class what they learn about their partner. After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Ask:

Q What is one thing your partner likes to do after school?

Have two or three students share what their partner likes to do after school. After each person shares, ask questions like these to stimulate a brief discussion:

Q What is one thing you want to ask [Carlos] about what he likes to do after school?

Q Who else likes to do what [Carlos] likes to do after school? Tell us about it.

FIND NEW PARTNERS AND TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY LIKE TO DO ON THE WEEKEND

Have the students return to the circle. Collect and redistribute the cards. Repeat the procedure described above for finding new partners. Have the students introduce themselves to their new partner. Use “Turn to Your Partner” to discuss:

Q What do you like to do on weekends?

After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Ask:

Q What is one thing your partner likes to do on weekends?

Have two or three students share one thing their partner likes to do on weekends. After each person shares, ask questions like these to stimulate a brief discussion:

Q What questions do you want to ask [Roger] about what he likes to do on weekends?


**REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY**

Have the students return to the circle and collect the animal cards.
Briefly discuss:

- **Q** What did you like about using the animal cards today?
- **Q** How did you help make this activity a success?
- **Q** Why is it important when we do activities like this to move around the room responsibly?

Explain that the students will have more chances to practice moving around the room and getting to know their classmates.
Adjourn the activity and have them return to their seats.

**After the Lesson**

Save the animal cards to use whenever you wish to randomly pair students throughout the school year.
End-of-Day Check-in

ABOUT END-OF-DAY CHECK-IN CLASS MEETINGS
This check-in meeting is designed to be used as a model for daily check-in meetings throughout the year. Check-in meetings bring the students together at the end of the day to talk about how things are going—socially and academically—in their classroom community, to discuss their hopes and plans for the coming days, and to reflect on their problem-solving efforts inside and outside the classroom. Check-in meetings are meant to be brief. Allow 10–15 minutes each day to end on a positive or a problem-solving note.

In this lesson, the students are asked to share with partners and the group what they liked about being in school today. Here are some other possible topics for future check-in meetings:

- How are you doing with taking responsibility for yourself?
- What is one thing you learned today?
- What do you want to learn more about in our class?
- What do you want to learn to do better in our class?
- What is a book you read recently that you liked?
- What will you do after school today?
- Are we treating each other the way we want to be treated? How can we improve?
- How are things going on the playground? How can we improve?
- What is your favorite thing to do in our class?
- What do you hope to do in school tomorrow?

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Contribute ideas that are different from other people’s ideas
- Reflect on how they contribute to the class meeting

Materials

- “Class Meeting Rules” chart
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

The Lesson

1. REVIEW THE CLASS MEETING RULES

Explain that the students will have a very short class meeting at the end of every day to check in on how things are going in their classroom community. Briefly review the “Class Meeting Rules” chart.

2. GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND DISCUSS TODAY’S CHECK-IN TOPIC

Use the procedure you have established to have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that today they will talk to their partner about what they like about school. Ask:

Q  What did you like about being in school today?

Say “Turn to your partner” and have the students turn and tell each other what they liked about being in school today. Signal to bring the students’ attention back to you. Have several volunteers share with the group. Encourage the students to contribute ideas that are different from their classmates’ ideas.

As the students share, help them talk to one another by asking questions such as:

Q  What questions do you have for [Jose] about what he liked about school today?

Q  Who else liked what [Jose] liked? Why did you like it?

Q  Who liked something different? Why did you like it?

Continue to help the students practice listening and asking one another questions during discussions. If necessary, model asking questions like these to give them examples of the types of questions they might ask:

Q  What did you paint during art?

Q  What did you make during free time?

Q  Where in the classroom do you like to read?
3 REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY
Share your observations of ways in which the students took responsibility during the meeting. Briefly discuss questions such as:

Q  How did you talk to your partner in a way that was helpful?
Q  How can you act in a helpful and caring way during the next class meeting?

Provide the students with a few moments of wait time before you call on anyone to respond. Have a few volunteers share their thinking with the group.

4 ADJOURN THE MEETING
Review how you would like the students to move from the circle. Adjourn the meeting and have them return to their seats.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

A component of the Caring School Community® program

GRADES K–1

Lesson Purpose

Students:
• Contribute ideas that are different from other people’s ideas
• Reflect on how they contribute to the class meeting

ABOUT END-OF-DAY CHECK-IN CLASS MEETINGS

This check-in meeting is designed to be used as a model for daily check-in meetings throughout the year. Check-in meetings bring the students together at the end of the day to talk about how things are going—socially and academically—in their classroom community, to discuss their hopes and plans for the coming days, and to reflect on their problem-solving efforts inside and outside the classroom. Check-in meetings are meant to be brief. Allow 10–15 minutes each day to end on a positive or a problem-solving note.

In this lesson, the students are asked to share with partners and the group what they liked about being in school today. Here are some possible topics for future check-in meetings:
• How are you doing with taking responsibility for yourself?
• What is one thing you learned today?
• What do you want to learn more about in our class?
• What do you want to learn to do better in our class?
• What is a book you read recently that you liked?
• What will you do after school today?
• Are we treating each other the way we want to be treated? How can we improve?
• How are things going on the playground? How can we improve?
• What is your favorite thing to do in our class?
• What do you hope to do in school tomorrow?
Playground Check-in

ABOUT PLAYGROUND CHECK-INS
In today’s class meeting, the students discuss their playground interactions. They talk about what’s going well on the playground and discuss ways they can be fair and helpful to one another. In a subsequent Check-in Class Meeting (see Playground Challenges in Week 5) the students talk about potential playground problems and solutions. Distinction is made between problems that do not jeopardize their physical and emotional safety (such as not taking turns, excluding others, and not following game rules) and conflicts that can jeopardize their emotional and physical safety and require adult intervention (such as bullying, teasing, and fighting).

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Listen to one another
- Speak clearly
- Learn and use discussion prompts to add to one another’s thinking
- Discuss applying the values of fairness and helpfulness on the playground

Before the Lesson

When you are not on yard duty, walk around the playground and quietly observe the students’ interactions. Note how students are taking responsibility or acting in caring, fair, or helpful ways (for example, taking turns, following established rules for games, including others, or solving problems by talking about them). Also note interactions that are problematic, such as teasing, bullying, hitting, name-calling, or excluding others. This information will help you lead this discussion and future meetings about student interactions on the playground.

Materials

- “Class Meeting Rules” chart
Prior to today’s class meeting, ask the students to notice ways they treat one another on the playground. Explain that they will be responsible for reporting their observations at the class meeting.

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### The Lesson

1. **GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND DISCUSS THE PLAYGROUND**

   Review your expectations for how the students will move to the circle. Have them gather for a class meeting with partners sitting together. Explain that in today’s class meeting, they will talk about how things are going and how they want to treat one another on the playground. Quickly review the “Class Meeting Rules” chart and remind the students to listen carefully when others speak and to speak so everyone can hear them.

   Ask the students to think about being out on the playground at recess and ask:

   **Q** What do you like to do on the playground at recess?

   Have several volunteers share with the group. As the students share, ask follow-up questions, such as:

   **Q** Who else likes [to play four square]? What do you like about it?

   **Q** What do others like to do at recess?

   Remind the students that you asked them to notice ways they treat one another on the playground. Use “Turn to Your Partner” to discuss:

   **Q** What are some ways that people treated you nicely or that you treated others nicely on the playground today?

   Have several volunteers share their thinking with the class. As the students share, point out ways in which students were fair and helpful to one another. (For example, “When Billy and Jasmine wanted to go across the monkey bars at the same time, Billy let Jasmine go first because she had been waiting longer. That was a very fair thing to do.”)
LEARN AND USE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Explain that during this discussion, you would like the students to use the prompts “I agree with _____ because…” and “I disagree with _____ because…” to help them listen and add to what their classmates say. Write the prompts where everyone can see them. Begin the discussion by asking:

Q If [you and another student both want to be on the bars at the same time], what can you do to be fair?

Q If [another student in the class doesn’t know how to jump rope], what can you do to be helpful?

Have several students respond. Encourage the students to use the prompts and to respond to their classmates’ thinking by asking follow-up questions, such as:

Q Do you agree or disagree with what [Michael] said? Tell us about your thinking.

Q What question do you want to ask [Harry] about his ideas?

Q How is what [Jennie] suggested [helpful]?

Remind the students that today they talked about what is going well on the playground and shared ideas about ways to be fair and helpful. Encourage them to try to use some of their ideas on the playground in the next couple of days. Explain that you will check in with them in a few days to see how things are going.

Note:

Use these discussion prompts during class meetings and other discussions throughout the day. As the students practice the prompts over time, they will come to use them naturally. Discussion prompts increase participation, listening, and student-to-student dialog.

For Kindergarten

You may want to start with just “I agree with _____ because…” or wait to introduce the prompts until later in the year.

Note:

If the students have difficulty generating responses to one another’s thinking, use “Turn to Your Partner” to have them discuss why they agree or disagree with a student’s suggestion.
3 REFLECT ON THE MEETING
Using “Turn to Your Partner,” discuss:

Q What can you do if you are not able to hear someone speaking?

After a moment, signal to bring students’ attention back to you.
Have several volunteers share their thinking.

Students might say:
“ I could ask the person to repeat what they said.”
“I agree with [Sylvia] because if the person repeats what they said, I will probably be able to hear them.”
“I disagree with [Sylvia and Ruben]. I think we should ask them to talk more loudly, because if they just repeat it I still might not be able to hear them.”

Explain that you expect the students to speak so everyone can hear them. If they are not able to hear when others speak, you expect them to politely ask whoever is speaking to speak more loudly. Explain that in future meetings you will encourage them to take responsibility for speaking clearly and asking others to please speak more loudly.

4 ADJOURN THE MEETING
Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their seats.
Your Home

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Get to know one another
- Move responsibly around the room
- Take turns

Before the Lesson

In this lesson, you will pair students using the same animal cards as in the Teambuilder “Things You Do” (Week 3). Again you will need enough pairs of cards for your class. (For example, if you have 20 students, you will need ten pairs of animal cards.) Each student will find the classmate with the matching card.

The Lesson

1. GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Have the students gather in a circle. Explain that today they will find a partner using the animal cards they used before. Partners will then talk and get to know each other.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

2 DISTRIBUTED CARDS AND FIND PARTNERS
Distribute one animal card to each student. Have each student hold the card in his lap so the animal side is up. Explain that students with matching animal cards will be partners. Have a student sitting next to you hold her card overhead so that everyone can see the animal side. Ask, “Who has the same animal on their card?” Have the student with the matching card walk over and sit facing his partner.

Have another student in the circle hold up her card and repeat the pairing procedure. Continue until all the students are paired and sitting together.

3 TALK IN PAIRS ABOUT A FAMILY MEMBER
Signal for the students’ attention. Have them introduce themselves to their partner, tell each other about one person in their family with whom they like to spend time, and say why. Explain that the students should be ready to tell the class what they learn about their partner.

After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Ask:

Q Which family member does your partner like to spend time with, and why?

Have two or three students share what they learned from their partner.

4 FIND NEW PARTNERS AND DESCRIBE THEIR BEDROOM
Have the students return to the circle. Collect and redistribute the animal cards. Explain that in a moment the students will hold up their cards so that everyone in the circle can see them and they will look around the circle to find the person with a matching card. Explain that when you say “Find your partner,” they will walk over to their new partner and stand facing him. Remind the students that they should move in a safe and responsible way. Ask:

Q What is one thing you can do to move in a safe and responsible way?
Class Meeting Lessons

Have two or three students share with the class. Remind them to use the prompts “I agree with _____ because…” and “I disagree with _____ because…” If necessary, write the prompts where everyone can see them.

**Students might say:**

“We shouldn’t bump into people.”

“I agree with [May Kwan], and I think we should walk slowly.”

“I agree, and we shouldn’t fool around.”

Have the students hold up their cards, and then you say “Find your partner.” When all the students have found their partner, have them sit in pairs.

Signal to get their attention. Have partners take turns introducing themselves and describing their bedroom to each other. Explain that they should be ready to tell the class what they learn about their partner.

After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Ask:

**Q** What is one thing you learned about your partner’s bedroom?

Have two or three students share what they learned with the group. After each person shares, ask questions like these to extend the conversation:

**Q** What questions do you have for [Raj] about his bedroom?

**Q** How is your bedroom similar to or different from [Balbir’s]?
FIND NEW PARTNERS AND TALK ABOUT THEIR FAVORITE TOY

Have the students return to the circle. Collect and redistribute the animal cards. Explain that they will use their cards to find new partners. Repeat the procedure described above for finding partners.

Have partners take turns introducing themselves and describing their favorite toy to each other. Explain that they should be ready to tell the class what they learn about their partner.

After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Ask:

Q What is your partner’s favorite toy?

Have two or three students share with the class. After each person shares, ask questions like these to extend the conversation:

Q Who else likes the same toy as [Evie]? Tell us about it.

Q Who likes a toy that is completely different from [Evie’s]? Tell us about it.

REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY

Have the students return to the circle. Help them reflect on how they moved in a responsible way. Ask and briefly discuss:

Q What is one thing you want to remember when you walk around the room?

Q Why is it important for you to move around the room in a responsible way?

Explain that the students will have more chances to get to know their classmates. Have them return to their seats.
MORE ABOUT VALUES CHECK-IN MEETINGS

In this lesson, the students review the values of fairness and helpfulness (see Week 2, Fairness and Helpfulness) and reflect on how they are applying the values of responsibility and caring. As in the previous Values Check-in Class Meeting, you will help the students begin to think and talk about how they live by the values by sharing your observations of their interactions.

This lesson may take more than one class period.

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Reflect on the values of caring and responsibility
- Contribute ideas that are different from other people’s ideas

Before the Lesson

At the beginning of the week, explain that you would like the students to think about how they can take responsibility and be caring to one another at school. In the days before the class meeting, stop the class periodically to point out ways the students are being responsible and caring. You may want to keep notes about your observations for use in the meeting. Pointing out examples of responsibility and caring as they happen helps to define the values and increases the students’ awareness and understanding of them.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

The Lesson

1. REVIEW AND DRAW EXAMPLES OF FAIRNESS AND HELPFULNESS

Remind the students that they have been focusing on ways to be fair and helpful to one another at school. Explain that today they will draw pictures of ways they have been fair or helpful and then talk about their pictures in a class meeting. Share some of your observations of ways the students have been fair and helpful to one another. Use “Turn to Your Partner” to briefly discuss:

Q What are some other ways people were helpful or fair?

After a few moments, signal to bring students’ attention back to you. Have a few students share their ideas with the group. Explain that the students will do a pencil drawing of ways they have been fair or helpful to share with the class. Distribute the drawing paper and pencils and give the students several minutes to draw. Let them know when they have about two minutes left.

2. GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND SHARE DRAWINGS

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Ask them to share their drawing with their partner and tell each other about how they were fair or helpful.

After a few moments, signal to bring students’ attention back to you. Have two or three volunteers share how they were fair or helpful. Ask:

Q What did your partner tell you about how she was fair or helpful?

Q What questions do you have for [Raul] about his picture?

Remind the students that if they are not able to hear someone speaking, they should ask the speaker in a caring way to speak more loudly.
DISCUSS WAYS THE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE AND CARING

Remind the students that over the week you have been pointing out ways they have been responsible and caring to one another. Use “Turn to Your Partner” to discuss:

Q How did you take responsibility for your own behavior today?

Q What were some ways you were caring to one another?

After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class. Encourage the students to contribute ideas that are different from other people’s ideas.

Students might say:

“I put all the blocks away after I played with them, and nobody had to remind me."

“I pushed in my chair when the bell rang.”

“I walked Maria to the office when she got hurt on the playground.”

“I agree with [Karina], she acted in a very caring way.”

DISCUSS OTHER WAYS TO BE RESPONSIBLE AND CARING

First in pairs and then as a class, discuss other ways the students can take responsibility and act in caring ways. Ask questions such as:

Q If you are working on an art project and it is time to go outside for recess, how might you get ready for recess?

Q If you see a student in our class sitting all alone during snack time, how might you act in a caring way?

Q How would [Marissa’s] suggestion make our classroom a better place to be for everyone?

Q Why is it important that we include everyone in the class?
REFLECT AND ADJOURN THE MEETING

Encourage the students to keep thinking about ways they can take responsibility and be caring to their classmates. Let them know you will check in with them throughout the year to see how they are doing building a community where everyone is fair, helpful, responsible, and caring.

Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their seats.

After the Lesson

As the students work together on various activities during the rest of this week, stop periodically and ask, “How are you being [responsible/caring] right now?” Pointing out how they are being responsible or caring provides the students with concrete examples of the values and helps them identify situations in which they can use the values to guide their behavior.
Tea Party

ABOUT “TEA PARTY”
“Tea Party” is a cooperative structure in which pairs circulate around the classroom and meet with other pairs to form groups of four. On your signal, pairs begin moving around the room. When you call “Tea Party,” they stop moving, turn to the nearest pair, introduce themselves, and share information on a suggested topic. Do as many “Tea Parties” as seem appropriate for the topic and the students’ interest. Use “Tea Party” discussions throughout the day in any content area.

Lesson Purpose
Students:
- Get to know one another
- Move responsibly around the room

The Lesson
1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY
Have the students gather in a circle. Remind them that they have been meeting different partners so that they can get to know all their classmates better and build a community in their classroom. Explain that today they will be doing an activity called “Tea Party,” another way to get to know each other by working with partners to form groups and talk.
2 MODEL “TEA PARTY”

Explain that in “Tea Party,” partners will move around the room and find another pair to form a group of four. When they are in their group of four, you will tell them what to talk about.

Briefly model “Tea Party” by asking a student to be your partner and another pair of students to stand up. Explain that on your signal, you and your partner and the other pair will begin walking around. When you call “Tea Party,” the pairs will turn and face one another to make a group of four. Demonstrate moving and forming a group of four.

3 PRACTICE MOVING AND FORMING GROUPS

Pair the students by having them turn to the person sitting next to them. Have the partners stand up and tell them that they will practice “Tea Party.”

Practice “Tea Party” by giving the signal for partners to walk around the room. After a few seconds, call “Tea Party.” Have the students stop, find the pair closest to them, and form a group of four.

Share your observations of how pairs moved responsibly around the room and point out one thing for them to focus on the next time they move. (For example, “The next time we move, remember to stay with your partner while you walk.”)

Have the students practice moving and forming groups until they know the procedure.

4 DO “TEA PARTY”

Tell the students that when they do “Tea Party” this time, they will talk about a topic in their groups of four. Give the signal for partners to begin walking around the room. After a few seconds, call “Tea Party.” Have the students stop, find the pair closest to them, and form a group of four. Signal for their attention. Ask them to take turns introducing themselves and discussing:

Q What is your favorite thing to do on the playground?

After a few moments, signal to get their attention.
Tell the students that partners will move again. When you call “Tea Party,” they will stop, find a different pair from the one they are with right now, and form a new group of four.

Give the signal for partners to walk around the room. After a few seconds, call “Tea Party.” Have the students stop, find the pair closest to them, and form a new group of four. Ask them to take turns introducing themselves and, this time, discuss:

**Q** What is your favorite thing to do in the classroom?

Do one more “Tea Party,” this time having the groups of four discuss their favorite snack.

**REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY**

Have the students return to the circle. Ask and briefly discuss:

**Q** What was one new thing you learned about a classmate today?

Using some of the student’s examples, point out that learning more about their classmates will help them build a stronger community. (For example, “[Jessie] told us that [Melissa] likes to play four-square. When you find out that someone likes to play the same games you do, you might want to talk to her and find out more or ask her to play with you.”) Ask:

**Q** How did you do walking around the room with your partner?

Have a few volunteers share their thoughts with the class. Have the students return to their seats.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

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Tea Party

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The Lesson

GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Have the students gather in a circle. Remind them that they have been meeting different partners so that they can get to know all their classmates better and build a community in their classroom.

Explain that today they will be doing an activity called "Tea Party," another way to get to know each other by working with partners to form groups and talk.

Lesson Purpose

Students:

• Get to know one another

• Move responsibly around the room

ABOUT "TEA PARTY"

"Tea Party" is a cooperative structure in which pairs circulate around the classroom and meet with other pairs to form groups of four. On your signal, pairs begin moving around the room. When you call "Tea Party," they stop moving, turn to the nearest pair, introduce themselves, and share information on a suggested topic. Do as many "Tea Parties" as seem appropriate for the topic and the students' interest. Use "Tea Party" discussions throughout the day in any content area.

Week 5
Lesson 1
Playground Challenges

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Discuss potential problems on the playground
- Learn and practice “Think, Pair, Share”
- Contribute ideas that are different from other people’s ideas
- Use prompts to add to one another’s thinking

Materials

- “Class Meeting Rules” chart

The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Remind them that in previous class meetings they thought of ways they could be fair, helpful, responsible, and caring in the classroom and on the playground. Explain that in today’s class meeting they will discuss problems on the playground and how they might try to solve those problems themselves before they turn to an adult for help.

Review the class meeting rules with the students. Remind them that when they mention problems on the playground they should...
Note: Use “Think, Pair, Share” throughout the day when you ask the students to respond to complex questions. This cooperative structure is especially powerful during discussions about math, reading, social studies, and science. Cooperative structures such as “Think, Pair, Share” will increase student participation and individual student accountability.

**BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON**

2 **INTRODUCE “THINK, PAIR, SHARE”**

Explain that when the students talk about the playground today, partners will use a procedure called “Think, Pair, Share.” Tell them that it is like “Turn to Your Partner,” except that they will think quietly to themselves for a moment before they share their thinking with their partner. Explain that the students will hear a question and think quietly to themselves for a moment. When you say “Turn to your partner,” they will turn to their partner and begin talking. On your signal, they will end their partner conversation and turn their attention back to you.

3 **DISCUSS PLAYGROUND CHALLENGES**

Begin the discussion about the playground by acknowledging that it’s not always easy to treat others in fair, helpful, caring, and responsible ways on the playground. Use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

Q What are some problems that can happen when you play together on the playground?

Have the students think quietly for a moment. Say “Turn to your partner” and have partners discuss the question. After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have a few volunteers share their thinking with the class.

**Students might say:**

“The older kids won’t let us play with them.”

“I agree, and sometimes some of them are mean to us.”

“Some kids don’t follow the rules in four-square.”

“People don’t share the jump ropes.”

Ask questions like these to encourage the students to think about the effect of their behavior on others:

Q How would you feel if some of your classmates wouldn’t let you play with them?

Q Why is it a problem if people don’t follow the game rules?
Call attention to any problems the students mention that require adult intervention. Explain that they should go to an adult right away for problems such as bullying and fighting. Explain that anytime the students do not feel safe, or they see a situation that seems unsafe for another student, they should ask an adult for help. Remind them that the adults in the school are committed to helping make the playground and school safe for everyone.

**Generate and Discuss Possible Solutions**

Help the students generate and discuss possible solutions to problems on the playground that they can try to solve without adult help. Use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

**Q** I hear you saying that some people [are hogging the monkey bars]. What would be a [fair] thing to do instead?

Have the students think quietly about the question for a moment. Say “Turn to your partner” and have partners discuss the question.

After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you. Have several volunteers share their thinking with the class.

As the students share, encourage them to contribute ideas that are different from other people’s ideas and to use the prompts “I agree with _____ because…” and “I disagree with _____ because….”

**Students might say:**

“I think we should take turns and let everyone have a turn.”

“I agree with what [Jack] said because it’s fair when everyone gets a turn.”

“I agree, and if some people don’t get to use the monkey bars, that’s not fair.”

Continue to use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

**Q** I’ve noticed that some people [aren’t lining up when it’s time to come in from recess]. What would be a more [responsible]
refer to “people” instead of using someone’s name.

As the students suggest solutions, ask questions like these to encourage them to respond to one another and extend the conversation:

Q  How would you feel if [you didn’t know how to play a game and someone helped you instead of teasing you]?

Q  What questions do you have for [Leon] about his idea?

Q  Do you agree or disagree with what [Benito] said? Tell us about your thinking.

5  **ADJOURN THE MEETING**

Explain that you would like the students to keep thinking about how to be fair, helpful, responsible, and caring to others in the classroom and on the playground.

Emphasize again that the students should ask an adult for help if someone is bullying them, if they see students bullying others, or if they feel as though someone might hurt them.

Remind the students that they will have many opportunities to check in throughout the year to see how things are going.

Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their seats.
Introducing Buddies

ABOUT BUDDIES
One of the essential components of the Caring School Community program is the cross-age Buddies program, which matches classrooms from different grade levels and pairs the students for regular activities. The Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book includes 40 Buddies activities and details the academic and social benefits of the program.

This class meeting introduces the students to the Buddies program and prepares them for their first Buddies activity, “A Drawing of My Buddy and Me” (see p. 45 in the Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book). If you and your buddy teacher choose a different first Buddies activity, use this lesson as a model for how to prepare your students to meet their buddies for the first time.

Schedule the first Buddies activity within a day of this class meeting.

This lesson may take more than one class period.

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Learn about the Buddies program
- Prepare to meet their buddies
- Make drawings and “mail” them to their buddies
- Practice “Think, Pair, Share”
- Build on one another’s thinking

Materials
- Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book
- Crayons or markers
- Drawing paper for each student
- An envelope for each student
Before the Lesson

Read the introduction to the Buddies program (pp. 10–41 in the Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book), establish a relationship with your buddy teacher, assign your students buddies, and plan your first Buddies activity.

The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE BUDDIES

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that this year each student in the class will have an older buddy and do interesting activities together. Tell the students which class and grade will be their buddy class. Explain that having a buddy will give them a chance to get to know someone from another class. Mention how often they will meet with their buddies. Explain that in the class meeting today they will talk about what it will be like to have an older buddy. After the meeting, the students will draw a picture for their buddies and “mail” their pictures to them.

2 DISCUSS EXPERIENCES WITH OLDER CHILDREN

Explain that the students will practice “Think, Pair, Share” again today to talk about their experiences with older friends. Review that in “Think, Pair, Share” you will ask them a question, and they will think quietly to themselves for a moment. When you say “Turn to your partner,” they will turn and discuss their thinking with their partner until you signal them to turn their attention back to the whole group.

Ask:

Q When have you had an older friend that you looked up to? What did you do together?

Have the students think quietly for a moment. Say “Turn to your partner” and have partners discuss the question. After a few moments, signal to bring their attention back to you.

Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class.
Class Meeting Lessons

**DISCUSS THE CHALLENGES OF HAVING AN OLDER BUDDY**

Explain that sometimes working with an older buddy can be challenging. Use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

Q What are some things that might be challenging about working with an older buddy?

As the students share their ideas, facilitate a discussion about problems that might arise with older buddies and possible solutions. Ask follow-up questions like these to encourage the students to build on one another’s ideas:

Q Do you agree or disagree with what [Cleo] said?

Q What are some things you could try if that happens?

Q What can you add to what [Gabrielle] said?

If necessary, remind the students to use the prompts “I agree with _____ because…” or “I disagree with _____ because….”

**TALK ABOUT WHAT BUDDIES WILL DO TOGETHER**

Explain the first activity they will do with their buddies. First, they will make a drawing about something they might like to do with their buddy this year. They will put the picture in an envelope and send it to their buddy. Their older buddies will do the same activity, and they can look forward to getting “mail” from their older buddies.

Then, the younger buddies will go to the older buddies’ classroom. The buddies will meet each other, sit together, and talk about the drawings they sent to each other.

Ask the students to think about activities they might do with their older buddies this year. Use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

Q What are some things we do in school that might be fun to do with your older buddy?
Tell the students the names of their older buddies and ask if anyone knows their buddy.

**ADJOURN THE MEETING AND MAKE DRAWINGS FOR BUDDIES**

Have the students return to their seats. Distribute drawing paper, crayons, and envelopes. Have the students write “To: [older buddy’s name]” and “From: [their name]” on their paper. Have them draw a picture of their buddy and themselves doing something together at school. Have them add a greeting, if they wish.

Have them address their envelope to their older buddy, fold their drawing, and place the drawing in the envelope. Collect the envelopes and have one student deliver the envelopes to your buddy class.

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**After the Lesson**

When the older buddies’ “mail” arrives, distribute it to your students and have them look at their pictures. Collect and save the pictures for the Buddies activity, “A Drawing of My Buddy and Me.” Plan to do the activity before you do the Buddies Check-in lesson.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

Buddies Check-in

ABOUT BUDDIES CHECK-INS

It is important to have the students reflect as a class after each Buddies activity. Plan to conduct this class meeting immediately after returning to your classroom from the first Buddies activity of the year, “A Drawing of My Buddy and Me” (see Week 6, Introducing...

Lesson Purpose

Students:

• Reflect on their first Buddies activity
• Build on one another’s thinking

The Lesson

GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE TOPIC

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that today the students will have an opportunity to reflect on their first Buddies activity. Mention that getting to know their older buddies and becoming friends with them will help them create a feeling of schoolwide community. Remind the students that they are acting on the values they have been discussing, such as helpfulness and caring, and are working to build a classroom and school community where everyone feels safe and included.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

2 DISCUSS WHAT WENT WELL DURING THE BUDDIES ACTIVITY

Begin the discussion by sharing a few observations you made about ways buddies worked well together. Have the students reflect on the positive aspects of their first Buddies activity. First in pairs and then as a class, discuss:

Q What were some things that went well during the first meeting with our buddies?

Q In what ways were you [fair/helpful/caring] when you worked with your buddy?

Q How did your buddy respond to you when you were [fair/helpful/caring]?

Q How did you take responsibility for your own behavior?

Ask follow-up questions like these to encourage the students to respond to one another:

Q What did you notice that was different from what [Jake] described?

Q What can you add to what [Yun] said?

Q What are some things we all agree went well?
**Class Meeting Lessons**

3 DISCUSS THE CHALLENGES OF WORKING WITH BUDDIES

Facilitate a discussion about problems students had working with buddies, and possible solutions, by asking:

- **Q** What problems did you have working with your buddy?
- **Q** How can you help the situation the next time you meet your buddy?

Ask follow-up questions like these to help the students build on one another’s thinking:

- **Q** What do you like about the solution [Philip] suggested?
- **Q** What can you add to what [Graciella] said?
- **Q** How would what [Tomoko] suggested help you work better with your buddy?

4 REFLECT AND ADJOURN THE MEETING

Use “Turn to Your Partner” to have the students tell each other one thing they liked about how they worked together during the class meeting and one thing they could do to improve the way they work together.

Explain that before the next Buddies activity, they will have a class meeting to talk about what they will be doing and how they can get ready to work with their older buddies.

Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their seats.

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**Note:**
It is recommended that buddy classes meet no less than once or twice a month. The preparation and Check-in Class Meetings for the next Buddies activity occur in Week 8. If you and your buddy teacher schedule the next Buddies activity before Week 8, skip ahead to those class meeting lessons.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON
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GRADES K–1

Buddies Check-in

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The Lesson
GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE TOPIC
Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together.
Explain that today the students will have an opportunity to reflect on their first Buddies activity.
Mention that getting to know their older buddies and becoming friends with them will help them create a feeling of schoolwide community.
Remind the students that they are acting on the values they have been discussing, such as helpfulness and caring, and are working to build a classroom and school community where everyone feels safe and included.

Lesson Purpose
Students:
• Reflect on their first Buddies activity
• Build on one another’s thinking

ABOUT BUDDIES CHECK-INS
It is important to have the students reflect as a class after each Buddies activity. Plan to conduct this class meeting immediately after returning to your classroom from the first Buddies activity of the year, “A Drawing of My Buddy and Me” (see Week 6, Introducing Week 6 Lesson 2)
Introducing Homeside Activities

ABOUT HOMESIDE ACTIVITIES
An essential component of the Caring School Community program is Homeside Activities, a program designed to involve adult family members in children’s learning. Each Homeside Activity is a starting point for conversations between the students and their adult family members. The book Homeside Activities describes the academic and social benefits of activities that connect home and school and explains how to prepare for and conduct them. There is a separate volume of age-appropriate activities for each grade level.

Lesson Purpose
Students:
- Learn about Homeside Activities
- Prepare for their first Homeside Activity
- Take responsibility for doing the activity

Before the Lesson
Read the first section of Homeside Activities for your grade level. Scan the year’s activities and choose one from early in the book to do as your first activity. Prepare for the activity you choose following the instructions in the Homeside Activities book.

Materials
- Homeside Activities
- Materials for initial Homeside Activity
The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE HOMESIDE ACTIVITIES

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that today they will learn about Homeside Activities—activities they will do at home with an adult family member and then bring back to school to share with their classmates. Remind the students that they are building a community in their classroom and explain that Homeside Activities will help to bring their family members into the community.

Explain that the students will do Homeside Activities once or twice a month. They will ask an adult relative or friend to help them with the activity. In each activity, they will have a conversation with their adult partner and then write or draw something on a record sheet with the partner. After completing the activity, they will bring it back to class to share with their classmates. Ask:

Q Whom could you ask to do a Homeside Activity with you at home?
Q If the first person you ask is busy, whom else could you ask?

2 DISCUSS TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE HOMESIDE ACTIVITY

Distribute and briefly review the first Homeside Activity. Explain that it is the student’s responsibility to take this activity home, find a time to do it with a family member, bring it back by the due date, and be ready to talk about it. First in pairs and then as a class, discuss:

Q How will you make sure you get the activity done on time?
Q How will you be sure to bring the activity back to school when it’s done?
Q The adults in your family are busy. How can you make sure they have time to do the activity with you?
**Students might say:**

“Don’t wait until the last minute.”

“I agree with [Rosa], and I’ll try to set up a time with them.”

“Let them know about it beforehand.”

“Don’t do it when they’re going to work.”

Ask questions like these to extend the conversation:

**Q** Who had a similar idea to [Lisa’s]? Tell us about it.

**Q** Who had an idea different from [Connor’s]? Tell us about it.

**Q** What can you add to what [Chad] said?

Remind the students that you expect them to take responsibility for completing the Homeside Activity and bringing it back to class by the due date. Explain that you will have another class meeting on the due date to discuss how the students did with taking responsibility.

### 3 REFLECT AND ADJOURN THE MEETING

Use “Think, Pair, Share” to briefly discuss:

**Q** How are you helping to make our class meetings successful?

**Q** What might you do to make the next class meeting run more smoothly?

Have several students share what they discussed with their partner. Encourage the students to use the discussion prompts and to build on one another’s thinking.

Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their seats.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

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GRADES K–1

Introducing Homeside Activities

Materials

• Homeside Activities
• Materials for initial Homeside Activity

Before the Lesson

Read the first section of Homeside Activities for your grade level.

Scan the year’s activities and choose one from early in the book to do as your first activity. Prepare for the activity you choose following the instructions in the Homeside Activities book.

Lesson Purpose

Students:

• Learn about Homeside Activities
• Prepare for their first Homeside Activity
• Take responsibility for doing the activity

ABOUT HOMESIDE ACTIVITIES

An essential component of the Caring School Community program is Homeside Activities, a program designed to involve adult family members in children’s learning. Each Homeside Activity is a starting point for conversations between the students and their adult family members. The book Homeside Activities describes the academic and social benefits of activities that connect home and school and explains how to prepare for and conduct them. There is a separate volume of age-appropriate activities for each grade level.

Week 7
Lesson 1
Homeside Activities Check-in

ABOUT HOMESIDE ACTIVITY CHECK-INS
It is important to have the students reflect after each Homeside Activity. Use this lesson as a model for a brief Check-in Class Meeting on the day each Homeside Activity is due. We recommend that your class do a Homeside Activity once or twice a month.

Lesson Purpose
Students:
- Reflect on their first Homeside Activity
- Explain their thinking

The Lesson

1. GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE TOPIC
Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that today the students will talk about how they did with taking responsibility for their first Homeside Activity.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

2 SHARE WHAT THE STUDENTS LEARNED

Ask and briefly discuss:

Q Which family member helped you with your Homeside Activity?

Q What did you find out about the family member? What did your family member find out about you?

Q What did you like about the Homeside Activity?

3 DISCUSS HOW THE STUDENTS TOOK RESPONSIBILITY

Share a few observations you made about ways the students took responsibility for the Homeside Activity. (For example, “I noticed that a lot of you brought your Homeside Activity back on time.”) Use “Turn to Your Partner” to discuss:

Q How did you take responsibility for getting the Homeside Activity done and getting ready to talk about it?

Have several volunteers share their ideas with the class. Encourage the students to comment on their classmate’s ideas.

Turn to Your Partner

During the whole-class discussion, avoid repeating or paraphrasing the students’ comments. This will encourage the students to listen to one another, and not just to you.

Note
4 DISCUSS HOW TO MAKE THINGS GO BETTER
Ask questions like these to facilitate a brief discussion about how to improve future Homeside Activities:

**Q** Now that you’ve heard some of the ways your classmates took responsibility for the activity, what do you want to do to make the next Homeside Activity go more smoothly?

**Q** How would that help?

*Students might say:*

“I could put it on the refrigerator when I get home. Then my mom will see it when she makes dinner.”

“I think we should do it as soon as you give it to us.”

“I agree with [Alex]. I think that if you wait until the last day, the adult might not be able to do it.”

5 REFLECT ON THE ACTIVITY AND ADJOURN THE MEETING
Use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

**Q** What was one thing your partner did today that helped you work well together?

Give the students a moment to think. Have several volunteers share with the class what their partner said to them.

Remind the students that they will do Homeside Activities once or twice a month. Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their seats.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

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GRADES K–1

Homeside Activities

Check-in

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The Lesson

GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE TOPIC

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that today the students will talk about how they did with taking responsibility for their first Homeside Activity.

Lesson Purpose

Students:
• Reflect on their first Homeside Activity
• Explain their thinking

1 ABOUT HOMESIDE ACTIVITY CHECK-INS

It is important to have the students reflect after each Homeside Activity. Use this lesson as a model for a brief Check-in Class Meeting on the day Homeside Activity is due. We recommend that your class do a Homeside Activity once or twice a month.

Week 7

Lesson 2
Preparing for a Buddy Interview

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Prepare for their second Buddies activity
- Listen to one another
- Explain their thinking

Before the Lesson

Meet with your buddy teacher and plan the activity “Buddy Interview” (see p. 49 in the Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book). Schedule a time to do this class meeting prior to doing the activity.

The Lesson

GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE “BUDDY INTERVIEW”

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Remind the students that this year each of them has an older student as a buddy, and that when they met their buddy they shared drawings of something they imagined doing with their buddy this year. Ask:

Q What did you and your buddy talk about when you met each other?

Q What was fun about being with your buddy?

Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class. Encourage
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

Explain that today the students will get ready for an activity they will do with their buddy. Explain that they will interview their buddy to get to know her better. They will ask their buddy some questions and answer questions their buddy will ask them.

2 BRAINSTORM INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Use “Think, Pair, Share” to discuss:

Q What questions would you like to ask your buddy to get to know him better?

As questions are suggested, check whether other students have similar questions. If several students agree, write the question on the chart labeled “Buddy Interview Questions.” As a class, choose five to seven questions the students will ask their buddies.

Students might say:

“I want to ask my buddy what she likes to do for fun.”
“I want to ask my buddy if he has a dog.”
“My partner and I want to ask our buddies what they like to do after school.”

Explain that you will type and photocopy the list of questions so each student will have the questions during the buddy session.

3 DISCUSS POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Explain that in an interview the interviewer often asks a question and then asks follow-up questions to find out more. Refer to one of the questions on the “Buddy Interview Questions” chart. (For example, “Do you have a pet?”). Read the question aloud and ask:

Q What could your buddy say when you ask this question?

Q If your buddy doesn’t say much, what other questions can you ask to find out more?
Students might say:

“You can ask your buddy, ‘What kind of pets do you have?’”

“How often do you walk your dog?”

“Would you like to have a pet? What kind?”

Explain that it is the students’ responsibility to get to know their older buddies. Encourage them to ask follow-up questions as they talk to their buddies.

REFLECT AND ADJOURN THE MEETING

First in pairs and then as a class, discuss:

Q When your partner talked to you today, how did you show you were listening?

Q Why is it important that you show your buddy you are listening when you talk later this week?

Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class. Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their desks.

After the Lesson

Type and photocopy the list of questions on the “Buddy Interview Questions” chart for each student to take to the buddy session.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON
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GRADES K–1

Preparing for a Buddy Interview

Materials
• Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book
• Chart paper labeled “Buddy Interview Questions” and marker

Before the Lesson
Meet with your buddy teacher and plan the activity “Buddy Interview” (see p. 49 in the Cross-Age Buddies Activity Book).

Schedule a time to do this class meeting prior to doing the activity.

The Lesson
GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE “BUDDY INTERVIEW”
Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Remind the students that this year each of them has an older student as a buddy, and that when they met their buddy they shared drawings of something they imagined doing with their buddy this year. Ask:

Q What did you and your buddy talk about when you met each other?
Q What was fun about being with your buddy?
Have a few volunteers share their ideas with the class. Encourage

Lesson Purpose
Students:
• Prepare for their second Buddies activity
• Listen to one another
• Explain their thinking

1 Week 8 Lesson 1
Buddy Interview Check-in

Lesson Purpose

Students:
- Reflect on their second Buddies activity
- Build on one another’s thinking

Materials

- “Class Meeting Rules” chart

The Lesson

1 GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE TOPIC

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that today the students will have an opportunity to reflect on how the Buddy Interview session went. Review the class meeting rules, paying particular attention to any rules you feel the students need to practice.


**BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON**

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**DISCUSS WHAT WENT WELL**

Begin the discussion by sharing a few of your observations about ways the students took responsibility for making the Buddies activity go well. (For example, “I saw people listening carefully to their buddies during the interviews and asking follow-up questions to get to know them better.”)

Have the students reflect on the positive aspects of their interviews. First in pairs and then as a class, discuss:

- **Q** What did you find out your buddy likes to do?
- **Q** Do you and your buddy like to do any of the same things? Tell us about it.

**DISCUSS THE CHALLENGES OF WORKING WITH BUDDIES**

Facilitate a discussion about problems the students had, and possible solutions, by asking:

- **Q** What problems did you have working with your buddy?
- **Q** What might you do differently the next time you meet your buddy?
- **Q** How would that help?

When discussing possible solutions, encourage the students to use the prompts “I agree with _____ because…” and “I disagree with _____ because…” to build on one another’s thinking.

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**Some common problems:**

- Buddies not paying attention to each other
- One buddy letting the other buddy do all the work
- The older buddy not knowing how to help the younger buddy without taking over
- Buddies disagreeing
- One buddy being left out (if working in a trio)

If only one or two students are having these problems, deal with them individually rather than in a class meeting.
Class Meeting Lessons

Mention that the students may see their older buddy around the school or in the community. Discuss:

Q When you see your buddy outside of class, what might you do?

Q How do you think that will make your buddy feel?

Q If your buddy is excited to see you, how will that make you feel?

Q How will your behavior toward your buddy help our school community?

REFLECT AND ADJOURN THE MEETING

Refer to the “Class Meeting Rules” chart and have the students briefly discuss:

Q How did you follow the class meeting rules today?

Q How does your behavior help us build a caring community?

Adjourn the meeting and have the students return to their seats.

After the Lesson

After each buddy activity, spend time reflecting as a class on how buddy partners did working with each other and ways they can improve their relationships. Have the students generate possible solutions to any problems.
BEGINNING-OF-YEAR LESSON

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Lesson Purpose

Students:
• Reflect on their second Buddies activity
• Build on one another's thinking

GATHER IN A CIRCLE AND INTRODUCE THE TOPIC

Have the students gather in a circle with partners sitting together. Explain that today the students will have an opportunity to reflect on how the Buddy Interview session went. Review the class meeting rules, paying particular attention to any rules you feel the students need to practice.

Materials

• “Class Meeting Rules” chart