I Can Be A Good Friend
A workbook for getting along with others at school.

By Marisa Parks
I Can Be a Good Friend
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Marisa Parks is an experienced behavioral interventionist who has been working with children who have trouble socializing with their peers. Marisa works in their schools and their homes to improve social and communication skills and promote social inclusion.

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Dear Teachers,

Thank you for taking the time to utilize this book for your classroom. I hope you find that it helps your students get along, support and help each other become a strong community. With the increase of inclusion of children with special needs in the classroom, teachers are often faced with increased expectations from families and educators to ensure the effective facilitation of the inclusion process. This can create an extra load of pressure and stress on the teacher. Fortunately, you are not alone. You have a whole classroom of helpers waiting to make a difference and help facilitate the inclusion process. The aim of this book is to guide students on helping, supporting, and accepting one another. In addition to the lessons and activities in this book, I have provided a list of additional ways you can structure your curriculum to further promote the inclusion of children with special needs. Enjoy and have fun!

Sincerely,
Marisa Parks

Using This Workbook

The workbook is broken down into lessons with proceeding activities. Many of the lessons invite class discussions. The workbook will outline rules for handling these types of discussions. Activities can be done in class, or can sometimes be done as homework. If done as homework, please have students discuss their homework the next day. If you have any questions or concerns, please email Marisa.aog@gmail.com.

Classroom Strategies for Inclusion

1. Pairing- pair students with special needs with students who are patient, kind, and high achieving. However, it is important to also pair these children with other students as well, so your high achievers don't feel burnt out. This also creates opportunities for children to get to know other children they wouldn't normally interact with.

2. Small Groups- use small groups for lessons and activities and make sure everyone has a job and feels included.

3. Praise- Give praise and compliment the child with special needs when an opportunity arises, so the other students can see the child as worthy and of value.

4. Tickets- Hand out tickets when you catch a student appropriately helping or supporting another. Put these tickets in a raffle for prizes.
Class Discussions

Many of the lessons ask the students' questions. When reading the lessons with the class, use these questions as part of the class discussions. Also, after reading each lesson you can ask the class if they have any questions or have something to share about what was just read.

Tips: Encourage children to speak openly about their feelings, opinions, and beliefs on each topic. Thank children for their contributions. Reflect on what the children are saying to show that you understand.

Class Discussion Rules

1. Raise your hand and wait to be called on before speaking.
2. No interrupting
3. Do not mention any names.
4. Please share whatever comes to your mind.
5. You do not have to share.
No matter what people do, no matter what people say,

We are all special, in our own special way.
Lesson 1: I am special like everyone else.

Everybody in the world has things that are special about them. The things that make us special can be different or the same. What are some things that make you special? These things can be things you like to play, do, talk about, learn about. Other things that make you special are how you treat other people, things you are good at, and experiences you have in your life. All these special things make you who you are.

Activity 1: I am special like everyone else.

Directions: Go to the next page. In the circle draw a picture of yourself. Draw or write things you like to do, play, or learn in the squares.

On the next page, fill in the answers to the questions.
About Me

1. My name is ____________________________________________

2. I am _____ years old and my birthday is _______________________

3. I have ____ pets and the types of animals and their names are ____________
   ____________________________________________________________

4. My favorite food is __________________________________________

5. My favorite color is __________________________________________

6. I have ___ brothers and ___ sisters and their names are ____________
   ____________________________________________________________

7. When I grow up I want to be a/an _______________________

8. I am good at ______________________________________________

9. My favorite animal is a/an ________________________________

10. Here are some words that describe me.

    ___________________________________________________________
We are also very much the same.

We go to school,

make mistakes,

and we all like to play.
Lesson 2: We have something in common.

Having something in common means having something that is the same as someone else. What are some things you have in common with students in your class? Some things people can have in common are things they like to play, learn about, or do. People can also have common things in their lives such as pets, brothers, sisters, cousins, or homework.

Activity 2: We have something in common.

Get into partners and figure out 3 things you have in common. You can look at activity #1 to help you figure this out.

Do this activity with 2-3 different partners.

Partner #1's name ____________________________________________

3 things we have in common:
1.
2.
3.

Partner #2's name ____________________________________________

3 things we have in common:
1.
2.
3.

Partner #3's name ____________________________________________

3 things we have in common:
1.
2.
3.
Lesson #3- We can work together.

When we work together, great things can happen. Working with more than one person means having more ideas and more hands to help. Think about when someone drops a stack of paper. When other people help pick up the papers, the papers get picked up faster. When playing Hide and Seek, some people can have different ideas of places to hide and you can learn some new hiding spots. Working together also happens when people are on a team. What are some things you have done where you worked together?

Activity #3- We can work together.

Teachers- As a class, create a list of 5 or more things students like to do and write it on the board. Some examples are video games, sports, jump rope, dance, and art. Have each student write their top 5 activities in order on a piece of paper. Collect these papers and put students into small groups based on what they chose.

Students- Your group will be creating a poster about the thing you all like to do. On the poster write and draw pictures about the thing you all have in common. Be sure to write why you like doing this activity. This poster may make other students want to do what you like!
Activity #3- We can work together!

Name of Activity:

People in my group:

What I did to contribute to the poster:
Sometimes we are kind of strange.

We can be hard to understand.

And not know how to play.
Lesson #4- People think and act differently.

People think differently. We all have our different ways of seeing and thinking about the world. Some of the best inventions, such as the lightbulb and the telephone, were because of people thinking about things differently.

Johnny is a 7 year old boy who loves bugs. At lunchtime, he sits at the table and talks about bugs. On the playground, he goes up to his friends and talks about bugs. One day Johnny was talking to his friend Greg about tarantulas. Greg didn’t want to talk about tarantulas. What could Greg say to Johnny?

Penny is a 6 year old girl who loves to hug and hold people's arms. Penny will get really close to her friends when she talks to them and plays with them. One day Penny went up to her friend Ashley and grabbed her arm. Then Penny got really close to Ashley's face and said, "You're my friend". Ashley thought Penny was nice, but didn't like how close Penny got to her. Ashley also didn't like Penny holding onto her so much. What could Ashley say to Penny?

Sometimes people act in ways that we don't understand. People think differently, so people act differently. If someone is doing something that bothers you, it is important to let that person know. Sometimes people don't know they are bothering you. When you let people know that something they are doing is bothering you, they can learn to stop. If someone tells you that something you are doing is bothering him or her, then you need to stop.

Activity #4- People think and act differently.

Think of 5 words and write them down in 1 minute. Don't worry about what the words are, just write the first 5 that come to your head! Share.

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________

When you look at the image below. What do you see? Share.

![Image of inkblot test]

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Lesson #5- People show feelings differently.

What do you do when you feel excited? What do you do when you feel mad? What do you do when you feel sad?

People show their feelings differently. Many people show their feelings by talking about them.
"I am so excited because I'm going to the beach today!"
"I feel mad because Jason took the ball from me without asking."
"I feel sad because Lori didn’t want to play with me today."

People also show their feelings with their bodies and faces. People also might make certain noises.

Activity #5- People show feelings differently.

Draw a picture of a time you felt excited, mad, or sad.
How do you feel?

Happy / Glad  Excited  Amused  Peaceful / Relaxed

Hurt / Sad  Disappointed  Guilty  Worried

Scared / Nervous  Confused  Embarrassed  Jealous

Mad / Angry  Frustrated  Annoyed  Lonely
Lesson #6- How would you feel?

Imagine you are on the playground at recess. You see other children are laughing and having a fun time playing games you don't know how to play. You want to ask someone to play, but it's hard for you to ask because you don't know how and your voice isn't working well. You end up spending recess alone and walking back and forth across the playground. How would you feel?

What you just imagined can really happen to some children. After thinking about how it might feel to be one of those children, what could you do to help?

Activity #6- How would you feel?

Your teacher will put you into groups and you will need to act out different scenes. You will then choose your favorite scene and present it for the class.

Scene 1- The lonely kid- Kid A and Kid B are playing something at recess. Kid C has no one to play with and feels lonely. Show how Kid A and Kid B invite Kid C to play.

Scene 2- Having trouble understanding.- Kid A, Kid B, and Kid C are talking. Kid B has a hard time saying things. Sometimes Kid B takes a long time to say something and sometimes what they say doesn't make sense. Show how Kid A and Kid C can talk and listen to Kid B nicely.

Scene 3- How to play- Kid A, Kid B, and Kid C are playing a game. Kid A doesn't know how to play. Show how Kid B and Kid C help.
Lesson #7- I can help others.

What is something you are really good at and something you have a hard time with? Some of us are good at playing with friends, singing, being funny and kind, sports, reading, math, drawing, or writing. We are all good at different things and can have a hard time with different things.

Alex is great at math. He can add huge numbers in his head and he is always doing well on his math tests. During recess, Alex tries to play basketball, but he has a hard time. He doesn't shoot the ball in the hoop and when someone passes him the ball, he misses. One time, he shot the ball in the hoop, but it was accidentally for the other team.

George is great at basketball. He understands the rules of the game and gets the ball a lot. He makes a lot of baskets, is good at dribbling and running down the court, and can catch and pass the ball. In class, George has a hard time with math. He has trouble understanding what to do and gets a lot wrong on his math tests.

After school, George asked Alex to come to his house. Alex helped George with his math homework by teaching George how to do the math problems in small steps. Then George and Alex went in the front yard to play basketball. George taught Alex how to dribble, pass, and how to shoot by showing him where to put his hands and what to do with his body. George also explained the rules of basketball to Alex by drawing a picture of a court.

The next day at school, George took a math test and got an A. Alex played basketball and was able to get the ball, dribble to the hoop, and score a basket for his team.

When we are really good at something we can help others who have a hard time. We can also help others by lending an extra pair of hands to get a job done. Helping people makes us and other people feel really good. When we have a hard time with something we can get better by asking for help and practicing.

Activity #7- I can help others.
Write and draw a picture about a time you helped someone or someone helped you.
It's okay to feel sad.

It's okay to feel mad.

It's not okay to be hurtful and make others feel bad.
Lesson #8- Don't be a bully.

What is a bully?
A bully is someone who purposely tries to hurt, scare, or embarrass others. A bully hurts others physically by kicking, hitting, pushing, tripping etc. A bully also hurts others by saying mean things and name-calling. A bully will hurt a person over and over again.

Why do Bullies bully?
Bullies bully for different reasons. Sometimes bullies bully to get what they want, to win, to impress their friends, or to feel powerful. No matter what the reason, bullying is not okay.

What do you do if you or someone you know is being bullied?
Tell someone! You can tell your parents, teachers, yard aids, friends, or anyone else you can talk to. Surround yourself with friends who will stand up for you. Stay in areas where adults can see you.

Have you or someone you know ever been bullied?

Activity #8 Don't be a bully
Create a poster to help stop bullying at school.
You can put a smile on somebody's face.

Be a good friend.

You make the world a better place.
Lesson #9- Be a good friend.

What makes someone a good friend? What do you do that makes you a good friend?

Good friends will listen to you when you talk, play with you, help you, talk to you, comfort you when you feel sad, and share with you. When you are a good friend to others it makes people want to play with you and be around you. Being a good friend will make your friends happy and make you feel happy too.

Activity #9- Be a good friend.

When you go to recess, practice some of the qualities that make someone a good friend. Write and draw a picture about what you did and how it made you feel. Then write and draw a picture about a time when someone was a good friend to you.

What I did to be a good friend.

What someone did to be a good friend to me.