

LESSON E-UI-L1

Chrysanthemum: The Power of Words

Unit I: Human Behavior

Grade Levels: K-5

Time: 30 Minutes



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Interdisciplinary Connections

Literacy, art, character education

Objective

Explain how words leave an impression on one's heart.

Key Words

- dreadful
- jealous
- perfect
- wilt

Lesson Materials

- *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes
- Cut outs of paper hearts (one for each student)

Lesson Plan

- Distribute the paper hearts to the students.
- Explain that you are going to read a story to them. They may have heard the story before, but this time you want them to pay attention to certain details.
- Tell students that, as you read the story, they should fold their hearts each time something mean is said to Chrysanthemum, or each time something is said that makes her feel sad. It does not matter how they fold their hearts. Tell students to unfold their hearts each time positive, nice things are said to Chrysanthemum.
- As you are reading, you may want to pause to make sure that the students are “catching” all the positive and negative things being said to Chrysanthemum.
- When you finish the story, the students' hearts should be unfolded. Direct the students to try to get all the wrinkles (folds/creases) out of the hearts. Give them a few minutes to try to get them out. Then discuss how they cannot get all the wrinkles out.
- Discuss how we can forgive people for saying mean things and hurting our feelings, but they still leave an impression, or a wrinkle, on our hearts and feelings. The next time a student makes fun of another person you can remind her that she is causing that person to have a wrinkle, or impression, on her heart.

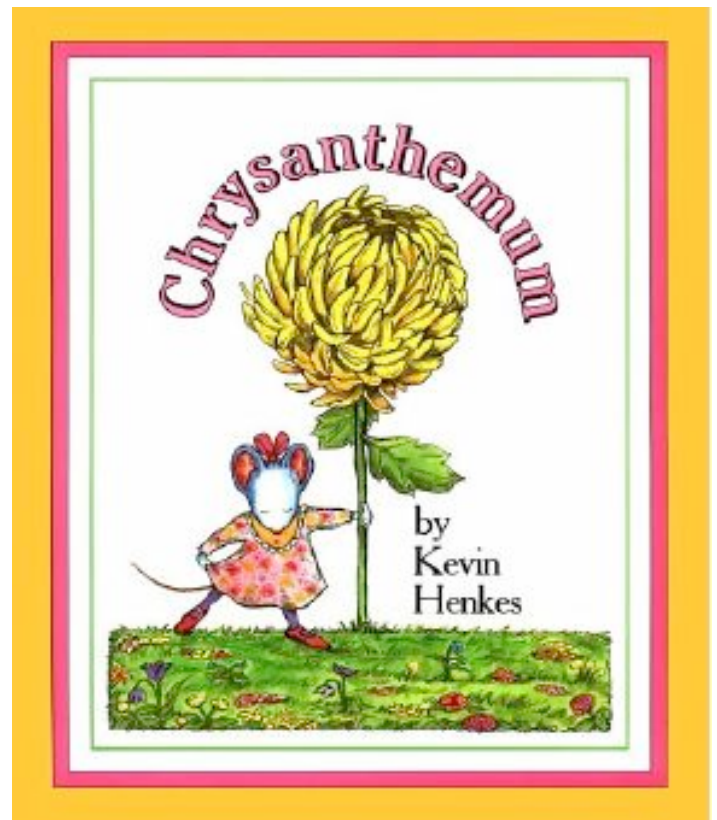


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes
<http://www.kevinhenkes.com>

Evidence of Understanding

- Evaluate the students based on their discussion of the story and the wrinkles in their hearts.
- Have older students write a paragraph explaining what they learned through this lesson.

Additional Activities and Resources

- Explore the symbol of the heart as the seat of emotions. Make a list of the ways the heart shape is used to convey an idea or feeling. (For example: the heart symbolizes valentines, the heart stands for loving another person or pets or flowers; concept of a “broken heart;” heartache; etc.)
- The concepts and issues raised in this lesson may be reinforced and incorporated into behavior/classroom management throughout the school year by revisiting the story at appropriate times and reminding the students of the activity and the lessons learned.

Taking Action and Giving Service

Ask the students to find the “hearts” in their every day lives, outside of the classroom:

- Guide them to look for heart-shaped objects in the sky (cloud formations), in the earth (rocks, flowers, sand) in food, magazines, and anywhere they can imagine.
- Have the students photograph or sketch their findings.
- Then have students select positive words from *Chrysanthemum* and use them to create a display with their heart art.
- Display the heart art and quotes at the local library with a copy of *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes.
- Note to Teacher: This activity can be used for Valentine’s Day.