



The Kindness Chain

Ages 6-9
A story and 9 activities

The Kindness Chain

It begins with a pencil.

On Monday morning, Chaya's pencil snaps in half just as the teacher says, "Start your test." She looks around. Everyone is already writing. Her heart starts to flutter.

The girl behind her, Leah, taps her on the shoulder and holds out a sharp, yellow pencil. Chaya whispers, "Thank you," and takes it. She finishes the test with time to spare.

At recess, Chaya thinks about that pencil. Leah didn't make a fuss. She just helped. It felt like a warm blanket in the middle of a cold day.

"I wish I could do something nice for her," Chaya thinks.

On the way home, she sees her neighbor Mrs. Katz struggling with two big bags of groceries. One bag is slipping out of her arm.

"Can I carry one?" asks Chaya.

"Oh, would you?" says Mrs. Katz. "Thank you, sweetheart."

Chaya carries the bag all the way to the porch. Mrs. Katz smiles so brightly that her whole face crinkles.

"You made my day," she says.

Chaya feels a little glow in her chest. She walks home with a bounce in her step.

That evening, Mrs. Katz is baking cookies for her grandson. When the first batch comes out, she wraps three in a napkin and walks across the street to deliver them. She knocks on the door of the new family who's just moved in.

A tired mother opens the door with a baby on her hip. "Welcome to the street," says Mrs. Katz. "I thought you might like something sweet."

The mother's eyes fill up. It has been such a hard week of boxes and unpacking. "Thank you. You have no idea how much this helps."

The next afternoon, that mother puts out a few extra cups of milk when her older son's friends come over after school. She remembers what Mrs. Katz has done, and it makes her want to do something similar.

One of the friends, a boy named Eli, is so surprised to get a second glass of milk that he tells his mother about it. "She was so nice," he says.

Eli's mother thinks about that. The next day she gives her bus driver a thank-you note she's been meaning to write for months. The driver reads it twice, and smiles, and drives a little more gently that day.

The bus driver stops to let an elderly man cross the road when the light is about to change. The man tips his hat and waves.

And on it goes. Nobody can say where it will end.

On Friday, Chaya walks into school and sees something taped to the wall in the hallway. A paper chain, made of colorful strips, stretches from one end to the other. Each strip has a sentence written on it, a small kindness.

Someone lent me a pencil. Someone carried my bags. Someone gave me a cookie.

Chaya stares. She recognizes the first strip. It is in Leah's handwriting. I lent a pencil to a girl when hers broke. She said thank you. Chaya, that was you.

"What's this?" she asks Leah.

"The class started it," says Leah. "Morah said to write down one kind thing each day. We add a link."

Chaya's cheeks go pink. She takes a strip and writes: Carried groceries for Mrs. Katz, and she gave me a smile. Then she tapes it onto the end.

When she steps back, the whole chain glows in the light from the window. It has grown to forty-two links by Friday.

"It's a lot of good," says Leah.

"All because of a pencil," says Chaya.



Activity 1 of 9

Remember the story

1. What starts the kindness chain?

2. Who carries groceries?

3. What does Mrs. Katz take to the new neighbors?

4. How many links does the chain have by Friday?



Activity 2 of 9

Fact or guess? (circle one)

1. Chaya's pencil snaps during a test. Fact / Guess
2. The new neighbors are not happy at all. Fact / Guess
3. The class makes a paper chain. Fact / Guess
4. The bus driver reads the note twice. Fact / Guess



Activity 3 of 9

Think and write

1. Tell about a small kindness someone did for you.

2. How does it feel to do something kind?

3. What kind thing could you do tomorrow?

Activity 4 of 9

Word search (find all 6)

Words: KINDNESS, PENCIL, CHAIN, COOKIES, SMILE, SHARE

U	R	V	P	K	O	B	P	J	F	B
N	M	V	O	I	A	P	H	N	C	U
T	L	C	E	N	D	C	H	W	O	F
V	E	H	E	D	L	E	G	F	O	V
T	U	S	R	N	O	R	L	J	K	L
P	P	O	O	E	W	A	N	O	I	M
L	R	D	I	S	N	H	K	A	E	Y
T	U	H	T	S	A	S	F	U	S	I
P	E	N	C	I	L	S	M	I	L	E
R	C	H	A	I	N	D	I	T	B	B
R	F	Y	B	I	F	U	K	C	D	N



Activity 5 of 9

Scrambled words (from the story)

1. IPNELC = _____

2. CHANI = _____

3. OEKOCIS = _____

4. OEEGRRCIS = _____

5. SLMEI = _____



Activity 6 of 9

Say it out loud

Practice each line in a calm, steady voice:

"Can I help you carry that?"

"Thank you, that was so kind."

"I'll pass it on."



Activity 7 of 9

My chart

My Kindness Chain

#	Who was kind to me	What I did next	How it felt
Link 1			
Link 2			
Link 3			



Activity 8 of 9

Draw it

Draw a paper chain with colorful links stretching across a hallway.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin green border, intended for drawing a paper chain.



Activity 9 of 9

Answers

Remember the story:

1. A pencil
2. Chaya carries them for Mrs. Katz
3. Cookies
4. Forty-two

Fact or guess: 1 Fact; 2 Guess; 3 Fact; 4 Fact

Scrambled words: PENCIL, CHAIN, COOKIES, GROCERIES, SMILE

Think and write: answers will vary; talk them over together.