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Lesson plan: Celebrate Pink Shirt Day

Grades: 3 - 5
Duration: 45 minutes

Overview

Recognized annually on the last Wednesday of every February, Pink Shirt Day aims to raise awareness of bullying. What started as a local movement to show solidarity against bullying is now a global phenomenon that is focused on raising awareness of bullying, as well as raising funds to support programs that encourage healthy self-esteem in youth. In this lesson, students will learn the origin of Pink Shirt Day and will work together to identify the common personal attributes of those who choose to stand against bullying.

Learning outcomes

Students will:

- Learn the origin of Pink Shirt Day
- Learn some of the key characteristics of a person who stands up against bullying
- Understand the impact of small acts of kindness

Preparation and materials

- Whiteboard and markers
- Computer and projection screen with internet access and speakers

Procedure

As a class, guide students through the origin of Pink Shirt Day, as described below. Next, show students the **Pink Shirt Day - Kids Explains** video to illustrate the impact of the Pink Shirt Day movement.

The story of Pink Shirt Day

One day, a student wore a pink shirt on his first day at a new school. It wasn't long before a group of students began to bully the student, calling him names and making fun of him for wearing pink. Travis and David, two older students, learned of what happened and wanted to do something to demonstrate that students in the school did not condone bullying. So, Travis and David decided to try something different that would show their support for the student. That night, Travis and David bought 75 pink shirts and then went on Facebook to tell others about their plan. The boys posted and messaged other students, encouraging them to wear pink the next day to show support for not only the student, but everyone else who had experienced bullying. The next day, nearly everyone in the school showed up wearing pink. The new student was so happy to see so many people standing up for him and felt welcomed and supported at the school.

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Next, guide the students through the questions below, capturing feedback on the whiteboard.

1. How did Travis and David choose to act when they learned that a new student was being bullied?

   Sample answers:
   - Proactively
   - With kindness
   - With support

2. What role did social media play in the origin of Pink Shirt Day?

   Sample answers:
   - Rapidly spread Travis and David's plan
   - Built a community of support
   - Encouraged others to join in spreading kindness

3. If Travis and David didn't come up with their plan to show the student support, how do you think the student would have felt?

   Sample answers:
   - Alone
   - Sad/depressed
   - Scared to be himself

4. What are some characteristics you could use to describe Travis and David's actions?

   Sample answers:
   - Brave
   - Thoughtful
   - Friendly

5. What are other examples of things we can do every day to show support for someone who is being bullied either in person or online?
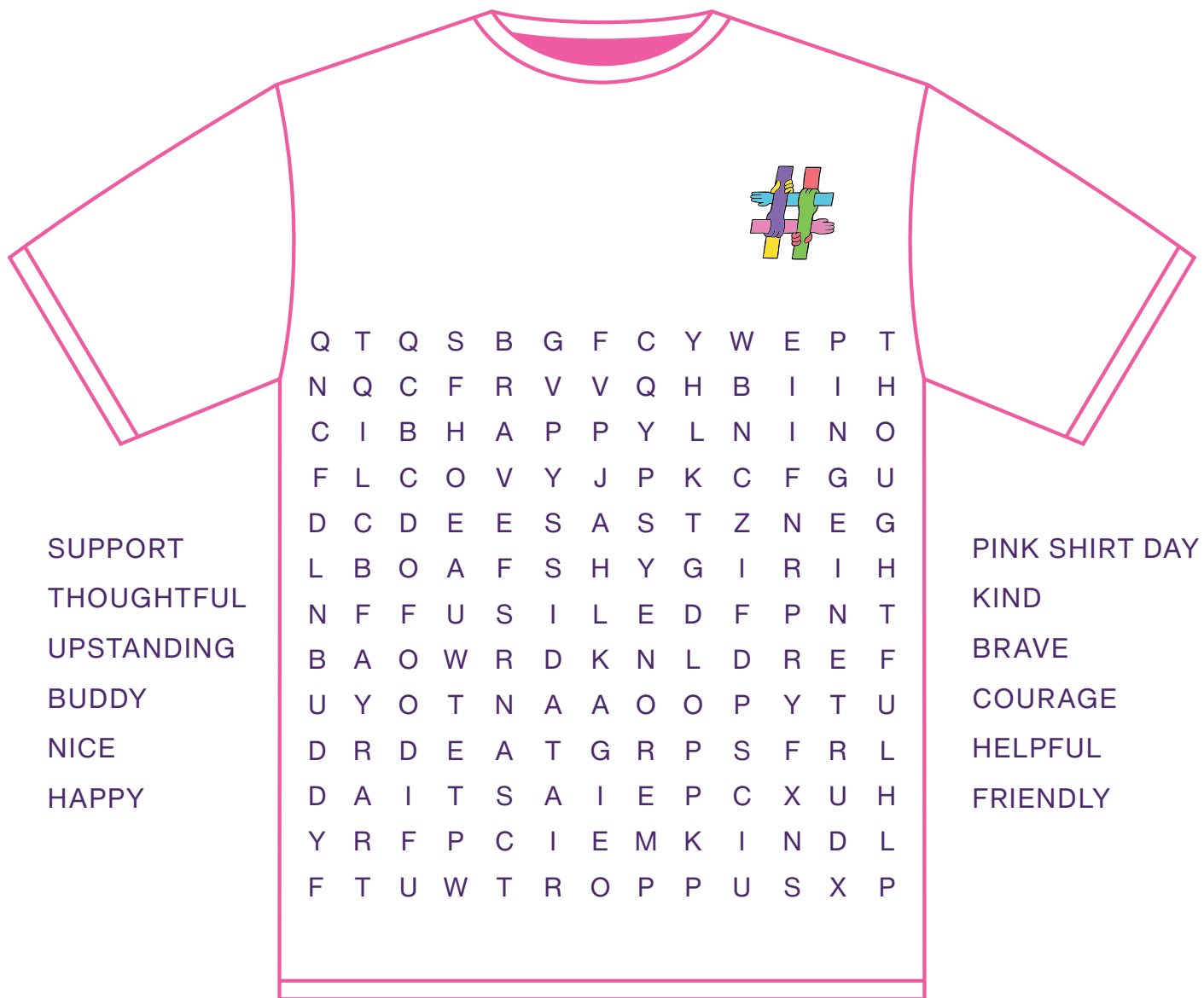
   Sample answers:
   - Reach out directly to the person being bullied, letting them know you're there for them
   - Invite the person being bullied to play a game with you, either online or in person
   - Tell a trusted adult about what you've experienced or witnessed

Lastly, provide students with the Pink Shirt Day word search puzzle.

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Pink Shirt Day word search

Cyberbullying affects everyone. You may have experienced it, or maybe you know someone who has. This word search highlights the common characteristics of people who stand up against bullying, both online and in real life.

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

SUPPORT
THOUGHTFUL
UPSTANDING
BUDDY
NICE
HAPPY

PINK SHIRT DAY
KIND
BRAVE
COURAGE
HELPFUL
FRIENDLY

Pink Shirt Day started as a movement to show support for students being bullied. Today, Pink Shirt Day is celebrated in almost 180 countries around the world, and every year, people show their support through social media posts, donations and, of course, by wearing pink.

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