



Educator Guide: Zink the Zebra Lesson

Recommended for Grades:

4th

Time:

3 minutes

National Health Education Standards:

This lesson aligns with the following National Health Education Standards:

- Standard 1: Use functional health information to support health and well-being of self and others.

For more information about the National Health Education Standards, visit the SHAPE America website: shapeamerica.org.

Learning Objectives:

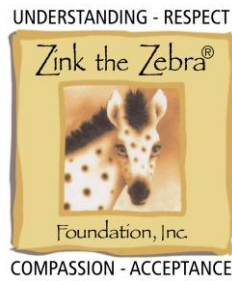
After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Explain why Zink the Zebra was treated differently than the other zebras.
2. Describe at least two ways to show kindness.

Lesson Description:

The “Zink the Zebra” Story was written by a young girl named Kelly Weil. Zink lives in the Lipis Jungle with her parents and brother. She has spots instead of stripes, resulting in her being treated differently than other zebras. The Zink the Zebra Lesson can be used as a starting point for learning about differences and treating others with kindness. On the next page is a letter from Les Weil, Kelly Weil’s father. There is a worksheet that can be found later in this guide that students can complete during this lesson if you choose to use it. It can also be accessed directly from the Zink the Zebra Lesson’s activity page on the E-Learning Center.





“It all started with a spot.”

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of your students. What you do every day both in and out of the classroom makes a difference in the lives of your students and their families.



Kelly Weil, Age 11

We are delighted to learn of your interest in implementing this innovative e-learning content and are grateful for your partnership in taking an active role to reduce bullying. As an introduction to this topic, and on behalf of Children's Wisconsin, I am pleased to introduce you to the “Zink the Zebra” Story, and most significantly, a message that resonates with our children.

“Zink the Zebra” was written by my 11-year-old daughter, Kelly Weil (1982-1993) who died of cancer. As a result of her experiences Kelly wrote about a zebra named Zink, who has spots instead of stripes.

Although Kelly had numerous challenges with her health, these spots represent the challenges that she faced while battling cancer as a child. Because she was perceived by her peers as different, Kelly experienced the pain associated with the withdrawal of friendships. She was teased based on misconceptions that others had about her physical differences and was ignored by other students, all while she was being treated for cancer. These are the very same behaviors that today we call bullying. Included in Children's Wisconsin Bullying prevention content is the story that Kelly wrote.

Kelly lost her battle with cancer, but the Zink the Zebra Foundation was formed with a commitment to ensure that Kelly's story, and that of a brave little zebra who learned to appreciate her differences, lives on. For many years, children have heard Zink's important messages and have received skills training and advice about bullying and how to safely intervene when it occurs. With Children's Wisconsin, we have built on the success of the “Zink the Zebra” Story for elementary school-aged children by creating this Bullying prevention e-learning content for kindergarten through twelfth grade students.

On behalf of Zink the Zebra Foundation, and my daughter Kelly, I would like to thank each and every one of you who are making a difference in your students' lives by implementing this content. Every student deserves the opportunity to succeed, grow and develop in a safe, bully-free environment with understanding, compassion, acceptance and respect.

Sincerely,

Les Weil
Zink the Zebra Foundation



Pre and Post-Test Questions:

Use the following questions with your students in any way that you see fit (on paper, using a survey tool etc.) You may choose to combine questions from various lessons and activities that your students participate in. Correct answer choices are bolded.

1. Why is Zink treated differently than the other zebras?
 - a. Because she bullies the other zebras
 - b. Because she doesn't have a family
 - c. **Because she has spots instead of stripes**
 - d. All of the above
2. Which of the following is a way to show kindness?
 - a. Giving someone a compliment
 - b. Standing up for someone being bullied
 - c. Saying hi to someone
 - d. **All of the above**

Vocabulary:

Use the following list of vocabulary as a reference for yourself and your students as you complete the Zink the Zebra Lesson. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Different – not the same
- Jungle – a tropical area with lots of plants growing on the ground in between taller plants and trees
- Kindness – being friendly, considerate and respectful toward others
- Tale – a story
- Zebra – an African wild mammal similar to a horse with black and white stripes

Zink the Zebra Lesson: Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: Complete this worksheet as you work through the Zink the Zebra Lesson.

1. What four things does Zink stand for?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

2. Why is Zink treated differently by the other zebras?

3. What are two ways you can show kindness?

a. _____

b. _____



Zink the Zebra Lesson: Worksheet Answer Key

1. What four things does Zink stand for?

- a. Understanding
- b. Respect
- c. Compassion
- d. Acceptance

2. Why is Zink treated differently by the other zebras?

Zink has spots instead of stripes so she looks different, and the other zebras think she is weird.

3. What are two ways you can show kindness?

Answers may vary. Any of the following are correct: saying hi, smiling at someone, giving a compliment, including someone new in your group at school, or standing up for someone being bullied.

Supplemental Activity: Celebrate Our Differences

Objectives:

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Identify one thing about themselves that makes them different from their peers.
- Show kindness when learning about differences in their peers.

Materials Needed:

- Puzzle piece template (can be found on google, Canva, etc.)
- Paper
- Pens, pencils, markers

Time Required:

30 minutes

Instructions:

Discuss with students that we all have similarities and differences and that's a good thing. If we were all exactly the same, life would be pretty boring. Brainstorm some ways that students are different from one another. These could include things like interests, family make up, physical appearances, likes/dislikes, family traditions etc.

Give each student a printed blank puzzle piece. Or, have students design their own piece. Inside the puzzle piece students should write a few sentences about one thing that makes them different from their classmates.

Find a place in the classroom to display and celebrate these differences. Perhaps choose one to share as a way to start each day. Whatever you can do to celebrate differences and encourage kindness will improve the climate in your classroom and beyond!

Handouts

Included on the following pages are additional resources that you and your students' families may find useful.



Celebrating Differences

We Are All Unique - and That's Awesome!

Everyone is different in their own way. When we are kind and respect each other's differences, we make the world a happier place.

What it Means to Celebrate Differences:

- Accept people for who they are.
- Be kind even if someone is different from you.
- Learn from other people's experiences and ideas.

Ways People Can Be Different:

- Culture or traditions
- Language they speak
- How they look (hair, skin, clothes)
- Abilities (how people learn or move)
- Interests and hobbies
- Family backgrounds

How You Can Show Respect:

- Be kind and use friendly words.
- Listen when others talk about themselves.
- Ask questions in a nice way.
- Include everyone in games and activities.
- Don't make fun of differences.
- Stand up for someone who is being treated unfairly.

Why Differences Are Important:

- They make life interesting.
- We can learn new things from each other.
- They help us grow and understand the world.



Talking with Your Child About Differences

As your child grows, they will meet people who may look different, come from different types of families and have different abilities. Talking openly about differences can help your child develop kindness, empathy, and respect for others. This can help prevent bullying because children who are most at risk of being bullied are different from their peers in some way.

How Can I Talk with My Child About Differences?

- Start early.
 - Children notice differences from a young age. Use this as a time to teach.
 - Give honest answers that are simple enough for their age.
- Encourage your child's curiosity.
 - Let your child know it's okay to ask questions.
 - If you are unsure of an answer, say, "I don't know, but let's find out together."
 - Don't avoid the topic or make your child feel bad for asking questions.
- Discuss many types of differences.
 - Some differences can be seen (skin color, hair type, clothing style, disabilities and medical conditions like a missing body part or speech problems).
 - Some differences can't always be seen (religious beliefs, learning styles or cultural backgrounds).
 - Teach your child that everyone is different in some way. Everyone likes different things and is good at different things. And that's great!

What Can I Teach My Child to Do?

- Be respectful.
 - Ask before touching someone's medical equipment (like a hearing aid or wheelchair).
 - Avoid pointing or staring at those different from you, but asking respectful questions directly to the person is okay.
 - Use "people-first" language. Say "a person who uses a wheelchair" rather than "a disabled person". This reminds children that a difference is just one part of who someone is.
- Always include others. Teach your child to say, "Hey, do you want to partner up for this project?" or "Come join me and my friends at recess."
- Be an upstander. Teach them ways to help when they see someone being bullied for being different.



Effects of Bullying

Bullying Hurts Everyone

Children who are bullied may:

- Feel insecure
- Avoid school
- Have trouble learning

As they grow up, children who have been bullied may:

- Be depressed
- Have low self-esteem
- Have health problems
- Get poor grades
- Think about killing themselves

Those who have observed bullying may feel:

- Afraid
- Powerless to help
- Guilty for not helping
- Pressure to join in

Children who bully are more likely to:

- Get into fights
- Damage property
- Drop out of school

Children who bully often get involved in other behaviors like:

- Breaking rules
- Stealing
- Carrying a weapon
- Drinking alcohol and smoking at young ages

Repurposed from <http://www.stopbullying.gov> and <http://www.olweus.org/public/effects-bullying.page>



Transcript

Slide 1

Welcome to Zink's story. Zink stands for understanding, respect, compassion and acceptance. Her story shares the importance of kindness. Everyone is different, and that's not a bad thing. Regardless of our interests, abilities, cultural background, or physical differences, everyone wants to feel accepted and valued. Click next to hear Zink's story.

Slide 2

Zink the Zebra, a special tale.

Slide 3

Once upon a time, a zebra named Zink lived in the Lipis Jungle with her mother, her father and her brother Fink.

Slide 4

Zink was a normal zebra in every way. She had four legs, two ears, one nose, one mouth, one tail ... and spots.

Slide 5

All the other zebras - even her mother, father and brother - had stripes. Because Zink had spots, the other zebras wouldn't play with her. Because the other zebras had stripes, they thought Zink looked odd.

Slide 6

One day Fink said to Zink, "Why do you have spots? They're so weird." Zink said to Fink, "Why do you have stripes? They're so weird."

Slide 7

Zink and Fink couldn't decide who was right. No one in the Lipis Jungle seemed to have the answer.

Slide 8

Finally Zink and Fink went home to ask their parents. "Which one of us is weird?" they asked. "Neither of you," their parents said. "Whatever you are is what you are," said their mother.

Slide 9

"We're all different," said their father. "Being different makes you special."

Slide 10

Then everyone nuzzled ...

Slide 11

and Zink and Fink went out to play.

Slide 12

The end.

Slide 13

Zink was treated differently because she has spots instead of stripes, so she looks different. But we should be celebrating our differences! So instead of bullying someone because they're different, ask questions instead. If someone in your class celebrates a different holiday than you, ask them about it. Or if the new girl at school has an accent ask her where she's from.

Sometimes kids are bullied because they are seen as not being "normal". But really, what is normal? Just because your family acts or looks a certain way doesn't mean that's what's normal.

We should always be kind to one another. Being kind to someone can be as simple as saying hi, smiling at them or giving them a compliment. It could also be including someone new to your group at school or standing up for someone being bullied.

Slide 14

So, the next time you see someone who looks different than you, remember to be kind. A little kindness goes a long way and can help make your school a better place.

Acknowledgements

Thank you for providing dedication, passion and leadership:

Les Weil – Zink the Zebra Foundation

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Contact us:

**Children's Wisconsin
E-Learning Center**

(866) 228-5670

healthykids@childrenswi.org

