Kindness is Cooler, Mrs. Ruler
by Margery Cuyler and illustrated by Sachiko Yoshikawa

Even kindergartners can make a difference when they all work together to do acts of kindness. Mrs. Ruler’s class builds a kindness bulletin board but they soon find that their classroom isn’t big enough to show the many different ways that kids can be kind to others. Author Margery Cuyler inspires children of all ages to have a heart and pay kindness forward.

Themes
Encourage Others
Pay-It-Forward
Acts of Kindness
Service Projects

Key Vocabulary
Kindness: doing something nice or good or caring for someone else
Scowled: to make an angry frown
Good Deed: a good act, action or work
Doing something nice for someone else
Grated (cheese): to rub against a tool with small sharp edges, cutting the cheese into small pieces
Blackboard: smooth, hard writing surface to write on with chalk. Often black.
Canes: a stick that helps someone walk
Bravo: a saying that means good or well done
Exclaimed: to say in a loud voice
Congratulate: to praise when a good thing happens
Gerbil: small mouse-like creature with a furry tail
Community: your neighborhood. Usually includes homes, schools and businesses
Hooray: something you say when you are excited or encouraging someone
Manners: proper behavior, polite conduct

Count on me: do what is expected, or what was promised to do
Puppy chow: food for a young dog
Shelved books: to put the books away on a bookcase
Skinned her knee: scraped the skin off her knee, a boo-boo
Ran for cover: what you might say when running away for protection

Discussion Starters
1. Why was the class “jumpy and grumpy”? It was rainy all week and they hadn’t been able to move and play outside. What kinds of things were they doing? Teacher Note: encourage students to use illustrations and text to provide answers. Whispered during story time, staring off in space, falling asleep, playing with paper, throwing things, playing ball, swinging legs, kicking ball, looking out the window, pulling hair, stealing hat. Has our class ever been like that? What kinds of things do we do when we are jumpy and grumpy?

2. What was the consequence for the five kids who Mrs. Ruler kept in from recess? She challenged them to perform five acts of kindness for their families and then share with the entire class.

Pay-it-Forward
When your school had The NED Show, most likely it was gifted to you by another school. So…when you bought a yo-yo after the assembly, you helped pay— it—forward to the next school. Now that’s keeping kindness going!

Aligned to Common Standards
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3. What did it mean when Mrs. Ruler said “Good deeds fill needs”? 
   Answers will vary: Look for something that someone else needs done. When you help, you are 
   doing a good deed.

4. What were some of the examples of the good deeds that Anaya and Tawana did at 
   home? They made special placemats, drew hearts on napkins to say they loved their mom, grated 
   the cheese for dinner, helped make the salad, loaded dishwasher, etc. What was their mom’s 
   reaction to their good deeds? It put her in a good mood and then they wanted to do more nice 
   things for her.

5. What good deeds did David do on the first day? He didn’t do any. What was Mrs. Ruler’s 
   reaction? She encouraged him to not give up and try harder

6. Share some of the ways that Raquelita and Connor practiced being kind. 
   Walked the dog, played ball with the dog, filled his water dish, played blocks with little brother, 
   helped carry groceries in the house.

7. What did David finally do to be kind to others? 
   Complimented his brother and shared his comb.

8. Why did Mrs. Ruler make it a class project instead of just for the 5 kids? The other kids 
   wanted to try it too. What did they do with all their acts of kindness? Wrote them on hearts 
   and make a bulletin board.

9. The E in NED’s name stands for Encourage Others. What are some ways you could 
   encourage others in our school and our community by paying forward kindness? 
   NOTE: The story itself does NOT tell what the kids and their families did in the community but 
   the author listed 100 Acts of Kindness in the back of the book. Help your kids think of kind things 
   they could do to PAY-IT-FORWARD and keep kindness going!

Writing Prompt

Discuss ways to be kind to other students in the class. Then have each student pick their favorite 
action and draw it. Use dictation or kid writing to have students talk about their pictures and 
write the words that they use to talk about their pictures.

Throughout the day – the teacher can choose one of the pictures and have the student explain 
their act of kindness. Then have all students stand up and start the pay-it-forward process by 
finding someone in the class to pay it forward to, spreading the kind act from student to student 
to student. After each child pays-it-forward – they should sit down until there is only one child 
left standing. Encourage that child to pay-it-forward to someone in another class at recess or 
after school! Remind students that they can ALL pay it forward to someone new as they become 
more like NED and keep kindness going.
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Activities

100 Acts of Kindness
Many classrooms count the first 100 days of schools. Consider adding a count for each day that someone encourages others and extends kindness. Make it part of your daily calendar activity as you count 1-100. You can write them on a chart, make a heart bulletin board, have kids share, or use a special counter to keep track of kindness (using heart-shaped paperclips, etc.). Just like in the book, integrate math into your special collection of 100 hearts as you encourage your classroom to keep kindness going. This project can also be done as part of a Valentine’s Day celebration in your classroom.

Pay-It-Which-Way?
Discuss and model the difference between back-and-forth kindness and pay-it-forward kindness. Model kindness with the demonstration described here. -------->

Being kind usually begins with those closest to you-big brother, mom, dad, sister, and then it can extend to kids at school that you play with and consider friends. Being kind isn’t always about being kind because someone was kind to you first. It is usually easy to be kind to someone if they are kind to you first – but what about when someone isn’t kind to you – or if they are even mean to you? Can you be kind to someone and expect nothing in return – that’s how you keep kindness going by paying-it-forward!

Pay-it-Which-Way Demonstration:
Model ‘back-and-forth kindness’ by saying kind words, just between each other.
1. Pick two students to come to the front of the classroom
2. Ask them to each say something kind to the other. To emphasize the point, have them go back and forth a couple of times.

Then, have students model ‘pay-it-forward kindness’ by starting a linked arm chain until everyone in the class is part of the chain.
1. Start off by saying something kind about one student.
2. That student will join you in the front of the room.
3. The student now calls out another student’s name and says something kind. That student joins the chain. The chain keeps growing until ALL students in the room are part of the chain.
4. Discuss what could happen when the last student is added to the chain!

For more info...
Accelerated Reading Quiz: 118479
Author website: www.margerycuyler.com

Create a Kindness Day at Your School!
Check out all the activities, available at www.thenedshow.com/kindness, for creating an all-school celebration of kindness at your school! Daily announcements, a poster, a bulletin board kit, kindness cards and more can help kick start a Kindness Day!

Kindness Button
Did you know you can purchase NED’s kindness buttons for your class? Visit www.thenedshow.com/shop_ned. Use them as a reward or incentive to encourage your students as they pay kindness forward!

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Directions: Color NED and write a sentence about how you can keep kindness going.