

THE KIND KINDERGARTEN CLASS

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READER & CLASSROOM ACTIVITY GUIDE
Building classrooms where everyone can belong
Read together. Wonder together. Talk about what matters.

FOR GROWN-UPS - *Why This Story?*

Jack and Jill are starting kindergarten.

Jack is transgender. Jill is transgender. They're nervous about meeting classmates who aren't.

But when Miss Everly Kind introduces them, she simply introduces them as Jack and Jill.

And then kindergarten happens.

Cubbies. Singing. Naptime giggles. Kickball. Lunch. Stories. Crafts. New friends.

Eventually, Miss Everly Kind invites her students to notice just how different the people in their classroom really are: height, skin, hair, gender, culture, religion, family, identity and experience.

And yet they're all kindergarteners.

The manuscript's central classroom message is that kindness belongs to everyone, regardless of how people are born or how they change throughout their lives.

Talk About It Together

Before reading

- What might make someone nervous on the first day of school?
- What helps a classroom feel safe?
- What does belonging feel like?

After reading

- What are some things Jack likes?
- What are some things Jill likes?
- What happens when Miss Everly Kind introduces them?
- What differences does the class notice among its students?
- What things do the students have in common?
- What does kindness look like in a classroom?
- What's the difference between being invited into a room and feeling like you belong there?
- What could you do if you noticed someone feeling left out?

A NOTE FOR GROWN-UPS

Children don't need every person in their classroom to have the same experiences in order to treat one another with dignity. They do need adults who communicate clearly: *You are safe here. You belong here. Other people belong here, too.*

The Kind Kindergarten Class centers transgender children while placing them within the wonderfully ordinary rhythms of childhood.

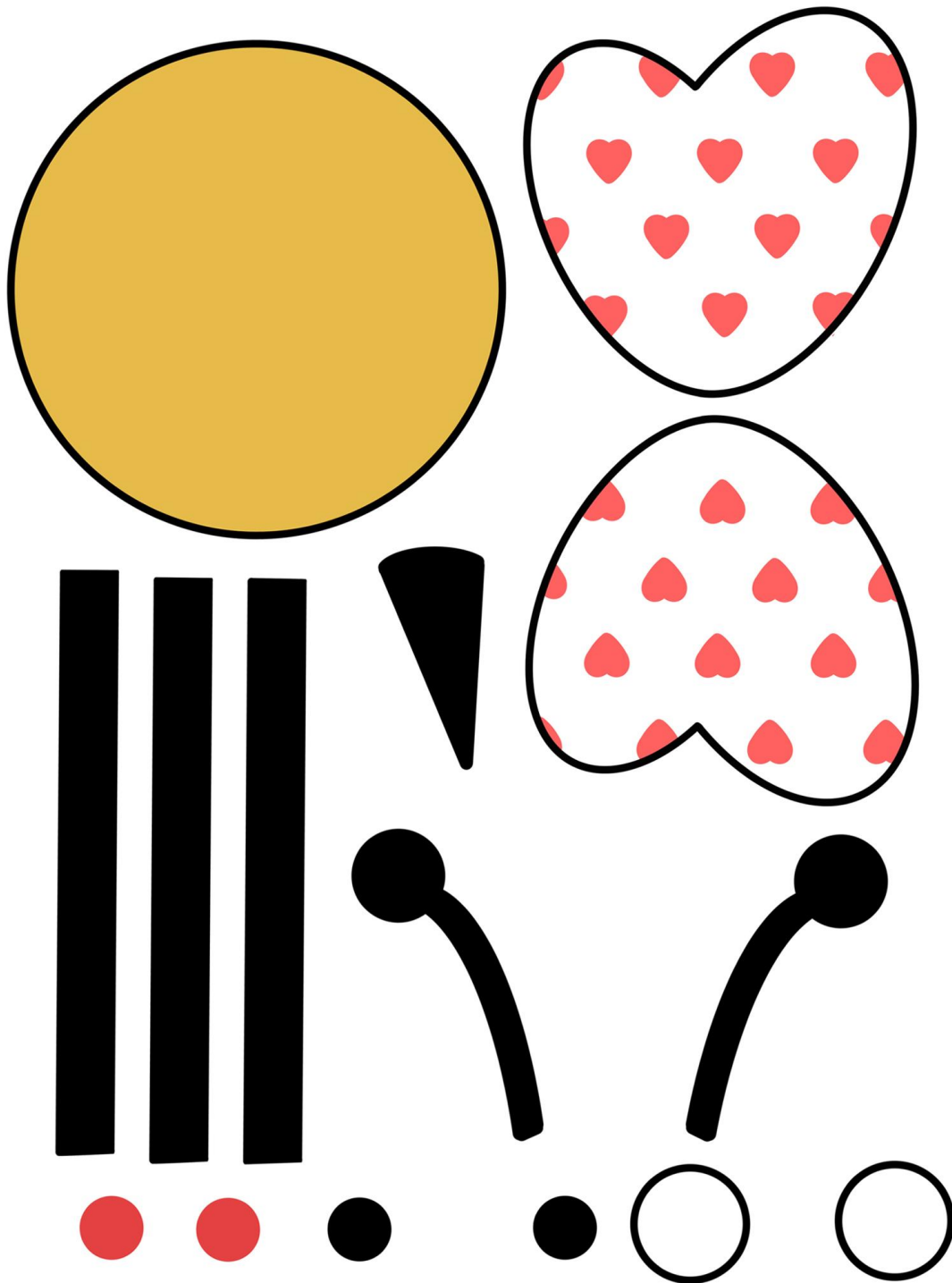
Jack and Jill aren't only transgender. They have interests. Families. Favorite activities. Personalities. Nervous first days. Cookies to swap. Allowing children to know one another beyond a single characteristic is one of the ways empathy grows.

In the Classroom

Create a **C.U.B. Club** based on the idea already embedded in the manuscript:

CONNECT • UNDERSTAND • BELONG

Ask students what each word could look like in everyday classroom life.



THE KINDNESS BEE

KINDNESS. PASS IT ON.

Help our kindness hive grow.

(grown-ups: print as many bees as you need – you will need scissors and glue)

On the wings:

I can help someone BELONG by...

On the body:

One KIND thing I can do today...

And perhaps on a little speech bubble:

Something kind I can SAY...

Then: **Cut out your bee, glue and paste it together. Add it to your classroom hive—or give it to someone who made your day kinder.**

(you can even create) “OUR BEE KIND HIVE” and start making and sharing bees to one another and see how your “bee” kind hive grows!

CONNECT • UNDERSTAND • BELONG

(This is a deeper classroom activity you can do with the bee craft or separately.)

C – CONNECT

How can we invite someone into what we're doing?

Draw or write one idea:

Examples could include:

Want to play?

Sit with us.

Would you like a turn?

U – UNDERSTAND

Sometimes we don't know something about another person.

What can we do?

☐ Ask a respectful question

☐ Listen

☐ Learn

☐ Remember that we don't need to understand everything about someone to be kind to them

Then:

Something I would like people to understand about ME:

B – BELONG

What makes YOU feel like you belong?

☐ Someone knows my name

☐ Someone listens to me

☐ I'm invited to participate

☐ I feel safe

- ☐ I can be myself
- ☐ Something else: _____

Then the key question:

How can we help someone else feel that way?

And at the bottom I'd create a pledge that isn't overly grand:

OUR CLASSROOM PROMISE

There is room for me here.

There is room for you here.

There is room for us to be different here.

And kindness belongs to all of us.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Stories that make room for every kind of child.