



## Peace Day Activity Ideas for Middle & High School Students

**The United Nations International Day of Peace (Peace Day)** is observed worldwide on (and around) **September 21**. **Peace Day provides a powerful opportunity for students to consider the concept of peace and how they can be a peacebuilder in their world**, as well as to express their visions for peace – personal, local and/or global.

**Observing Peace Day** is also a powerful way to open the year with dialogue about interpersonal respect, compassion and local/global citizenship. **Peace Day activities are flexible** and can connect with multiple curriculum areas, after-school clubs and/or anti-bullying programs.

### GENERAL

Observe a minute of silence at noon on Sept. 21 in the spirit of our common humanity and desire for peace. This is a global activity on 9/21 in all time zones. You can say to yourself silently “Breathe In World, Breathe Out Peace.”

Peace Day is an important day worldwide for humanitarian aid and service. Organize or take part in a local service project. How does helping others build peace and greater understanding? Or, raise funds for an international cause related to peace such as Mercy Corps: <https://www.mercycorps.org/>.

Invite someone who is doing nonviolence, social justice or environmental work for a special assembly or interactive workshop. What are the challenges to creating a more peaceful world? What kind of actions can make a difference?

Bring in a guest to teach basic mindfulness skills for stress reduction. You can also download a peace breathing activity and learn more from <http://www.peacedayphilly.org/what-can-you-do/children/>. Teachers can also watch the free 24 minute video about mindfulness for kids: <http://bit.ly/1HmOrcd>.

Bring in different cultural foods for a special lunch and have students talk about the tradition of the food they brought to share.

Do a project for your school that involves collaboration. What are the challenges of working together? What are the rewards?

In small groups, create a “PSA for peace” and perform it for the larger group.

Plant a peace pole ([www.peacepoles.com](http://www.peacepoles.com) - there are more than 500,000 of these worldwide!), peace rocks or a peace garden on your school grounds.

## **ARTS BASED**

Create Peace Cranes - writing a poem or message of peace before folding - and give them to others or place them in your environment as a reminder of the unifying goal of peace. More info: <http://peacecraneproject.org>.

Make a painting, collage, mural or drawing of youth around the world. What responsibility do we have for youth in other parts of the world?

Create and display posters or Peace Flags - <http://bit.ly/1D3wnyR>.

Learn about the Principles of Nonviolence developed by Martin Luther King Jr. (you can download a PDF at: <http://www.peacedayphilly.org/what-can-you-do/non-violence/>). Create an assembly, artwork, essay, song, rap or poem inspired by these principles.

## **WRITING BASED**

Have each student write and draw a Peace Pledge - what they pledge to do as a peacebuilder in their world. Students should be encouraged to put their peace pledge where they can see it daily and can journal re: the experience of "living their pledge."

Express "What is Peace to me?" or "How I can create Peace in my world?" in writing and/or art. Consider different levels of peace (personal, family, community, global).

Write peace poetry using haiku or free prose forms, or have a Peace Poetry Jam assembly.

## **INTERNET ACTIVITIES & DISCUSSIONS**

Watch this Global Citizen video <http://bit.ly/1FYBEZo> and discuss what it means to be a global citizen.

Learn about the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and how in some parts of the world children are not able to exercise those rights Go to: <http://bit.ly/1O6f4rv> for more info and short videos.

Learn about the current Syrian Refugee Crisis: <http://www.mercycorps.org/countries/syria> and watch this music video of the song "What If" which asks us to be mindful of people living in war and conflict: <http://bit.ly/YDdXYD>.

## **SPORTS**

Unite with young people around the world by playing soccer game (or any sport) in a spirit of unity & good sportsmanship: <http://bit.ly/1D3vshV>.

***Create your own Peace Day activities! Share your Peace Day plans with #Peace Day to @peacedayphilly or Email us contact@peacedayphilly.org.***