



UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE - SEPTEMBER 21

Peace Day Activity Ideas for Elementary School Students

The UN International Day of Peace (Peace Day) is observed worldwide on **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 and anti-bullying programs.

GENERAL

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

Bring in a guest to teach basic mindfulness skills for stress reduction. You can also download a peace breathing activity and learn more about the benefits of mindfulness from the *CHILDREN & YOUTH* page of www.peacedayphilly.org. Teachers can watch the free 24 minute video: <http://bit.ly/1HmOrcd> to learn more.

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

Peace Day is an important day worldwide for humanitarian aid & service. Organize or take part in a local service project or a fundraiser to benefit people somewhere else in the world. How does helping others build peace?

Bring in different cultural foods for a special lunch and have children 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?

Talk about bullying in small groups. What is it? How can you help someone else who is being bullied? Small groups can share their ideas with the larger group.

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

ARTS BASED

Create a collaborative peace collage with images and words that communicate peace.

Create a Peace Day song and perform it at a special assembly.

In pairs, create a poster with the universal statement: “May Peace Prevail On Earth.”

Make and display “Pinwheels for Peace” outside your school, with art images on one side and wishes for peace on the other: www.pinwheelsforpeace.com.

Make a painting, collage, mural or drawing of children around the world, or of an issue related to the environment. What responsibility do we have for children in the world and our environment?

Chalk 4 Peace: Use sidewalk chalk to draw images of peace on your playground or sidewalks outside your school. Invite students from a nearby school to work with you: <http://www.chalk4peace.org>. Take photos and have wipes available!

Create and Display Peace Flags - <http://bit.ly/1D3wnyR>.

Make a Peace Dove and march with it on Peace Day: <http://bit.ly/1U2Cdee>.

Dance for Peace on 9/21 and join the global “One Day One Dance” initiative: <http://bit.ly/1IkYzF>.

Watch “I Will Be a Hummingbird” (2 min animated) and then talk/write about how you can play your part in a more peaceful world. <http://bit.ly/1DZJNzT>.

WRITING BASED

Have each student write and draw a Peace Pledge (you can download a template from our website). Students should be encouraged to put their peace pledge where they can see it daily - some schools display the pledges in the hallways.

Write peace poetry using haikus or free prose, and then display them with artwork around the school.

(Suggested for 4th and 5th graders) Write a letter to a child in a part of the world where there is conflict. Teachers can help to find information about children elsewhere. Think about what it must be like to live in an area where there is war, displacement, lack of basic services, etc.

Research and write about one or more of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>).

Find many more ideas in the “What Can You Do?” section of www.peacedayphilly.org, or make Up your OWN Peace Day activities!

Use [#peaceday](https://twitter.com/peaceday) to promote your activities and ideas on social media - Share your Peace Day actions at contact@peacedayphilly.org.

What will your school do for Peace Day?