

Make a Difference Day

Actual Holiday: Fourth Saturday in October

First Celebrated: 1992



Introduction

Make a Difference Day is the largest national holiday of community service. For 20 years, it was sponsored by USA Weekend and Points of Light. Even though this is no longer the case, many other organizations support the goal of this day: improving the lives of others. The expression of love from helping others is sometimes all we need to make a difference! Celebrate this day in your classroom by helping students learn how they can make a difference and having them imagine different ways they can help others.

Materials

- *Share Your Wealth* activity sheet (page 67)
- art supplies
- pencils

The Activity

- Tell students that they will be celebrating Make a Difference Day. It is a day about giving back and doing things for others for free. Ask students if they have ever volunteered or helped someone for free.
- Have students who have volunteered share their experiences. Ask them how they felt about volunteering and if they would do it again.
- Students may need help understanding how they can make a difference. This class activity should help. Write *classroom*, *school*, *community*, and *home* on the board. Each word should be in its own separate column.
- Ask students to give ideas of how they can help make a difference in the classroom. If they're unsure, give them the example of helping another student with their classwork. Another idea is helping their teacher collect homework. Write their ideas on the board.
- Next, ask students to give ideas of how they can help make a difference at their school. Maybe they can help organize a bake sale or volunteer to help their principal with a project. Write their ideas on the board.
- Then, ask students to give ideas of how they can help make a difference in their community. Maybe they can serve a meal at a shelter. Write their ideas on the board.
- Finally, ask students to give ideas of how they can help make a difference at home. Maybe they can help with chores, such as doing the dishes or weeding the garden.
- Now that students have an idea of how they can make a difference, tell them that there is another way we can help as well—by giving money. Have students imagine that they have \$400 to donate to others. Distribute the *Share Your Wealth* activity sheet to students. Have them look at the money on the page and imagine how they would spend it to help others. Give them ideas, such as donating to a charity or food bank, giving to the homeless, or paying a bill for someone who is struggling. They will have four opportunities to “share their wealth” by writing their ideas on each bill.
- Once students complete the activity, have them color their imaginary money. Have them get into small groups and share their responses. Ask students to tell why they chose who/what they did. Groups will choose their favorite answers and then share them with the class.

Name: _____

Share Your Wealth

