#911GOODDEEDS

TEACHER’S GUIDE
K-12

Teaching children about the importance of helping others.

A lesson plan in observance of the federally-recognized September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (9/11 Day)

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Dear Educator,

In observance of the federally recognized September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, known as “9/11 Day,” we are looking to generate tens of thousands of good deeds by young people who want to make the world a better place.

The campaign is called #911GoodDeeds.

#911GoodDeeds is an easy to implement, yet important education program in which your students, whether individually or as a group, devise good deeds they can do to help others, or as a way to pay tribute to local heroes in the community, like public safety officers or members of the military.

These materials are offered at no cost to help educators and parents participate in the annual 9/11 Day observance and the #911GoodDeeds campaign. The program provides a way for young children with no memories of the 9/11 attacks to learn about 9/11 in a constructive way, one that helps them contribute to making the world a better place, one good deed at a time.

Here’s all you need to do:

1. Read this Teacher’s Guide and familiarize yourself with the lesson plan and the Lesson Plan Resources included.

2. Take time to think about and adapt this program to fit your own teaching style, time limitations, the age of your students, and the goals you wish to achieve through this program.

3. Share this program with other teachers who may not be familiar with it.

4. Engage your students in the #911GoodDeeds campaign in observance of the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance.

Win $1,000 For Your Classroom! After 9/11 is over this year, our nonprofit organization will search for and randomly select five students who shared #911GoodDeeds through social media, or emailed them to us at 911GoodDeed@911day.org. The classrooms of these five students will receive $1,000 for school supplies and other educational materials.

If you have any questions about the #911GoodDeeds, just email us at 911GoodDeed@911day.org.

Thanks for helping create tens of thousands of #911GoodDeeds this year!

Sincerely,

David Paine
Co-founder and President, 9/11 Day
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Learning About 9/11 Day

A few months after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, a small group of 9/11 family members and friends met to talk about how best to pay tribute to their lost loved ones. They decided that the terrorists shouldn’t “have the last word” in defining how future generations of Americans remember 9/11 each year.

Inspired instead by the way the country came together in the weeks following the attacks and the national outpouring of support, the group launched the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, widely known today at 9/11 Day, with the goal of “taking back the day” and gradually transforming the anniversary of 9/11 from a day of tragedy into a day of doing good.

The idea was simple: Ask Americans, young and old alike, to do one at least good deed on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks each year in the spirit of national unity, and in tribute to 9/11 victims, first responders, recovery workers, military, those injured and others impacted by 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Today, that simple idea has grown into the largest annual day of service in the nation, and one that is now officially recognized under federal law. Each September 11, tens of millions of Americans of all ages spend time volunteering, supporting charities and performing other good deeds.

The good deeds that people do are as diverse as the people that do them. In tens of thousands of communities across the nation, as examples, people donate winter coats, blood, eye glasses, and books; assemble care packages for military personnel; volunteer to walk dogs at animal shelters; clean up parks; repair and clean temporary housing for veterans; bake and deliver cookies for local police and fire stations; clean debris from national cemeteries; and buy needed school supplies for teachers. In more than 50,000 classrooms, students learn about the events of 9/11 through programs that include service-related activities, often utilizing downloadable lesson plans like this one, available free of charge at 911day.org.

The goal of the 9/11 community is ultimately to make the notion of doing good deeds each September 11 ubiquitous in America, forever transforming 9/11 from a day of tragedy into a day of doing good. You and your students’ participation in #911GoodDeeds is helping make that transformation a reality.
#911GoodDeeds Lesson Plan

This is a great and easy lesson plan with many important teaching moments. Here’s all the information and handouts you’ll need to get started engaging your students in activities for 9/11 Day designed to help others in need. Feel free to be creative, and adapt these concepts to align with your own vision and teaching goals.

**STEP ONE: The 9/11 Teaching Moment**

1. Remember that students K-12 will have no personal memories of the 9/11 tragedy.

2. In advance of the federally-recognized September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance (“9/11 Day”), talk with your students in an age-appropriate way about the events of 9/11. The 9/11 Memorial and Museum has excellent materials and videos to help present the historical aspect of the event.

3. We recommend that, in addition to whatever else you intend to cover related to the attacks, you talk about what happened on 9/12 and in the immediate aftermath of the attacks. Talk about when America was transformed by a remarkable and historic spirit of selflessness and national unity, brought about by the magnitude of the tragedy. Discuss examples of how strangers helped people who were stranded when planes were grounded, or other examples of how people who didn’t know one another helped each other.

4. For Older Students: Talk about what first responders did to help in the weeks after 9/11, how there was an extraordinary expression of compassion for those impacted by the attacks, and how many are still suffering to this day from illnesses brought on by exposure to toxic substances.

5. Explain how this moment of national unity, and the widespread compassion became the inspiration for the 9/11 community establishing September 11 as a National Day of Service, which later became officially recognized under federal law in 2009. (9/11 Day and MLK Jr.’s birthday are the only days ever federally designated as National Days of Service in U.S. history.)

6. Show the short 2-minute video about 9/11 Day, or other videos that are available on the 9/11 Day website (under Resources).

7. Discuss with your students (depending on their age) what might have caused that spirit of unity to dissipate over time, or more simply (for younger children), what things could people do to try to get along better.

8. There are a number of excellent lesson plans at 911day.org/lesson-plans available to talk to your students about having empathy for those who might be different, whether on the basis of race, religion, economic background, or other factors.

9. One idea is to task your students with the assignment of learning more about and meeting people from different cultures or backgrounds, whether internationally or right here in America.
STEP TWO: #911GoodDeeds

Getting Started

#911GoodDeeds is a fun, flexible and easy to implement lesson plan. Add your usual dose of creativity.

A few simple rules:

1. Always begin by getting “buy-in” from your students. Do they want to do this?
2. Good deeds need not to be performed on 9/11; students can perform them within any time period you specify.
3. Each student develops and performs at least one good deed.
4. Any good deed counts including good deeds that people do to help themselves deal with a problem or issue in their lives.
5. Students and your entire class can team up to perform good deeds.
6. The program has three important parts: Plan, Pledge, and Do. We encourage you to include activities that allow students to do all three in ways that are appropriate for their age.
7. Scale the sophistication of this program to fit the age of your students.

Plan

1. Lead a class discussion that brings some of these ideas to light and how they might help others. This becomes the “class good deed list.”
2. Consider introducing your students to organizations in their community that might depend on the help of others.
3. Invite your students to think about, and write down (using the #911GoodDeed Student Worksheet) a few good deeds they might be able to do themselves for 9/11 Day this year.
4. If needed, distribute to your students a list of good deeds, from your own list, or from 911day.org/GoodDeeds, or other resources.
5. Ask each student to adopt one idea they might want to do. It can be one of their ideas, or an idea suggested by fellow classmates. It’s OK if students want to do the same thing, or team up.
6. This planning process can take place in the classroom, or it can be part of a take-home exercise in collaboration with parents, mentors, or other family members. We have included tools to support both approaches.

To help, we have posted on our website, at 911day.org/GoodDeeds, a great list of hundreds of good deeds.

Teaching Tip #1: Students (with their parents help depending on age) can give away clothing they’ve outgrown or don’t wear, help buy school supplies for the class, bake cookies and deliver them to local fire or police stations, make small donations to a favorite charity, write a letter to a distant relative or pay them a visit, make their bed, help siblings do their homework, visit an animal shelter and learn what they do, or perhaps donate an old bicycle or toys. It’s entirely up to them to decide what to do.
Teaching Tip #2: One of the good deeds your students can do is share their ideas with us. Just have them email their ideas to us at 911GoodDeeds@911day.org. If we like them, we'll add them to our website list, and credit your classroom.

Pledge

When your students have decided what they plan to do, the next step is for them to make a pledge to do it. There are a number of ways they can do that, all of which can include and support the “sharing” function. Here are a number of suggested ways, some of which are meant to be age-appropriate:

Pledge Cards (For Younger Students)

1. We have provided you with a sample Pledge Card, which are different than Pledge Signs. Basically they are an 8 ½ x 11 form that younger students use to develop and describe their good deeds. Teachers can post these Pledge Cards on the wall in the class, or in the hallway (along with the Pledge Cards from other classes.) It can be a really cool thing when an entire school does it!

2. Optional Photos: In lieu of students sharing photos on social media, they can instead create Pledge Signs (see next section) or Pledge Cards in class (or at home). Then you can take photos of them holding up their signs or cards, and attach these photos to each student’s Pledge Card to be displayed in the class or school.

Pledge Signs (Great for Many Age Groups)

1. Students make their own “Pledge Signs” that describes what they plan to do for 9/11. The sign can be made of anything, and any size. (It could be on a movie theater marquee!) Encourage students to be creative.

2. They take a photo of themselves holding up the Pledge Sign, or if the family is participating, a photo of the family with the Pledge Sign.

3. Students then share the photo with their good deed on social media using the hashtag #911GoodDeeds and #911Day (or if too young, ask their parents to share it).

4. If students are camera shy or their parents prefer them not to take photos, they can take a photo of just the Pledge Sign, or a picture of something they are planning to donate/give away to someone else, a nonprofit organization, or your school. Then that can be shared on social media.

Always invite your students to share with the class what they each pledged and do and why.

Teaching Tip #3: For students who have not completed the assignment or are unsure what to do, work with them to select a good deed from the class list, something they can do easily.
Do

1. It’s up to you to determine the timeframe for your students to complete their good deeds. 9/11 falls on a Wednesday this year. Depending on the start of your school schedule, you may have lots of other things going on. So feel free to ask students to do their good deed anytime between September 9 and September 30 (if you want to extend it that long).

2. Students should be encouraged to take a photo of themselves performing the good deed, if applicable, and share it, either on social media or in class.

3. In lieu of photos, they can just fill in the section on their Pledge Card that indicates the date the good deed was completed.

4. If the class is working on a good deed together, it can take as long as it takes. That’s entirely up to you.

Teaching Tip #4: Providing opportunities for your students to share what they did is a vital part of the program. We have built many opportunities for sharing throughout this lesson plan.

Take Home Activity

Especially for children K-6, getting the parents or guardians of your students involved in #911GoodDeeds can really make the program take off. Most parents welcome the opportunity to teach their children about generosity and helping others. We have provided tools for you to do so.

Here’s how the family element works.

1. Explain to your students that you’d like them to talk with their parents about helping you plan a good deed for 9/11 (or any day in September). You can start the process in class by helping them come up with their first idea.

2. Give each of your students the #911GoodDeed Student Worksheet to take home, along with the Parents Letter, which explains the assignment to their parents.

3. Students discuss with their parents/family the good deeds they might do for 9/11 this year, answering the questions on the 911GoodDeed Worksheet. Students can do service at home or in school however you see it.
4. Parents then help their child follow the #911GoodDeeds Call to Action:

   a. Assist their child in making their #911GoodDeeds Pledge Sign.

   b. Take a picture of their child (which can be with their parents) holding their “Pledge Sign” that describes in a few words the child’s planned good deed.

   c. Optionally parents can take a photo of just the sign, an item that might be donated, or another photo that symbolizes what the child plans to do. Or not take a photo.

   d. Print the photo and give it to the child to bring to class along with the completed #911GoodDeed Worksheet.

   e. Post the photo on the family’s social media channels (Optional) using the hashtag #911GoodDeeds and #911Day.

   f. Parents are also encouraged to challenge their friends on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat to participate in #911GoodDeeds, with the question: “What’s your #911GoodDeed?”

Teaching Tip #5: Collect all the Pledge Cards and post them on the class wall, or at other locations in the school, like the hallway if many classes are participating together.

Teaching Tip #6: Take photos of the students holding up their Pledge Cards or Pledge Signs, and glue/staple them to each Pledge Card/Sign, then display them in class.
Lesson Plan Resources

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#911GoodDeeds

Dear Partners and Guardians,

In observance of 9/11, which is now a federally-recognized National Day of Service and Remembrance (known as 9/11 Day”), each student in our class has been challenged to come up with a good deed they can do over the next month in recognition of this important national observance. The program is called #911GoodDeeds, and it was created by the 9/11 community nonprofit organization that founded and runs 9/11 Day nationwide. The goal of the program is to generate tens of thousands of good deeds in September by young people throughout the United States.

Our class is inspired to participate in this effort, and we hope your family will join in as well by creating a good deed you and your child can do together. There is no cost to participate and you are not required to make a cash donation.

Good deeds can be anything. Here are just a few examples: Your child (with your help if needed) can bake cookies and deliver them to local fire or police stations, write a letter to a distant relative or pay them a visit, make their beds or do the dishes for the day, give away clothing they've outgrown or don't wear, help siblings do their homework, offer to care for a pet, or perhaps donate an old bicycle or toys.

You can visit 911day.org/GoodDeeds to find hundreds of great ideas to consider.

The important thing is for you to allow them to think up ideas for themselves. You can help, but you want the idea to “be their own.”

Thanks for helping your child participate in 9/11 Day

Sincerely,
For 9/11 Day: Ten Steps to Make The World a Better Place

1. Bring your #911GoodDeeds Worksheet home and talk to your family about the kinds of good deeds you could do yourself or with them for 9/11 this year. Have them help you fill it out.

2. Visit 911day.org/GoodDeeds and explore the list of ideas.

3. Decide on a good deed you want to do.

4. Pick a day to do it. You don’t have to do it exactly on 9/11.

5. Make Your #911GoodDeeds Pledge Sign (Be creative!)
   a. Get a large marker or pen.
   b. Write your good deed on the sign. Keep it short, and start with the words.
   c. Include #911GoodDeeds at the bottom of the sign.

6. Have someone take a picture of you holding up your sign. Include your family in the photo if you are doing the good deed together.

7. Share it on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat (or have your parents share it) with the hashtags #911GoodDeed #911Day.

8. Print out your photo on a printer or at another place where you can print the photo if you can.

9. Bring your photo and activity sheet to class and share your good deed with your classmate.

10. Later on, take a picture of you doing your good deed and share that one, too.
To help you do a #911GoodDeed for this year, please fill in the following information. If you did a good deed for 9/11 in previous years, try something new this year.

NAME: ________________________________________________________________________________________________

SCHOOL: _____________________________________________________________________________________________

TEACHER: ____________________________________________________________________________________________

Write down three good deeds you’ve thought about for 9/11 this year:

1. _____________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. _____________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. _____________________________________________________________________________________________________

Which one did you select? ____________________________________________________________________________

Why did you choose that one? __________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Who will this good deed help, and why did you pick them? ____________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________________________________________________

Today’s Date: _______________________   I did (plan to do) my good deed on: _____________________________
#911GoodDeed Challenge

My Name is: ____________________________________________________________

My Teacher is: ____________________________  My Grade is: _____________________

For 9/11 Day this year, I plan to ... __________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

I live in (City/State): _______________________________________________________

I’m ____________ years old. I did (plan to do) my good deed on: __________________
What is Your #911GoodDeed?

Here’s what to do!

1. Take a photo of yourself holding a sign that describes in a few words a good deed you plan to do for 9/11. As alternatives, take a photo of something you plan to donate, or just write a message pledging to do a good deed for 9/11.

2. Share it on social media using the hashtag #911GoodDeeds and #911Day, or as an alternative, share it in class.

3. Challenge your friends to join #911GoodDeeds (If you post it on social media).

Remember, any good deed counts, and you don’t need to do it on September 11.

Need ideas? (Visit 911day.org/GoodDeeds.)
Questions and Answers

Why did the 9/11 community launch #911GoodDeed Challenge?

Soon after the 9/11 attacks, leaders within the 9/11 community launched the September 11 National Day of Service and Remembrance, known widely today as “9/11 Day.” The goal of 9/11 Day is to gradually transform the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks from a day of tragedy into a day of doing good. Americans of all ages are asked to participate in 9/11 Day each year by pledging to do one good deed to help others in need.

As a teacher, do I need to follow your lesson plan, or can I develop my own?

You are the teacher. You can do whatever you want. We welcome your feedback and suggestions to make this lesson plan better next year.

What if my students are too young to post their #911GoodDeed on social media? How do they participate?

Students or their parents can email their good deeds to us at 911GoodDeed@911day.org, and we will add them to the list of good deeds being considered for the trip.