

Ideas for activities using WE CAN!

A resource created by Kelly Turner, deputy head teacher, Feb 2025

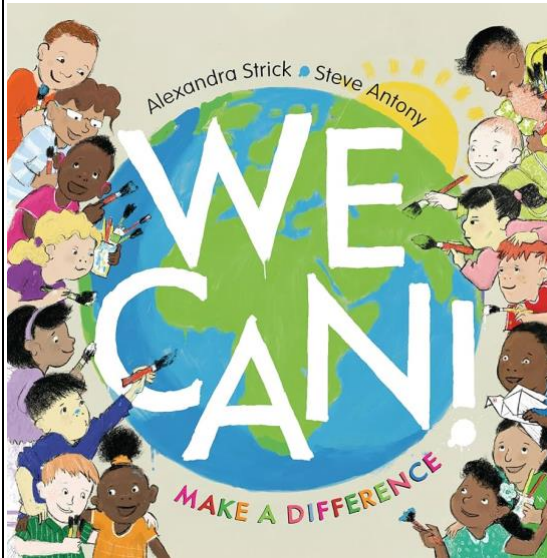
Did you know?

The word 'kindness' was recently chosen as the Children's Word of the Year, following a survey by Oxford University Press (OUP) of more than 6,000 children across the UK. More than half of the children (61%) chose it as their word of the year for 2024.

<https://corp.oup.com/news/kindness-chosen-as-childrens-word-of-the-year-2024/>

Text: We Can, published by Otter-Barry Books (Oct 2024, HB)

Author: Alexandra Strick
Illustrator: Steve Antony



What kind of world do children want to live in?
Can we all come together to make a difference and make our world a better, safer, greener, kinder place?
YES, we can! Join 15 children as they plan and deliver an amazing We Can! festival - a joyous, peaceful call to action, with green activities, mural-making, mindfulness and kindness along the way, beautifully depicted in words and pictures by the bestselling creators of You Can! We Can! was created with real children, who sent messages of hope and practical suggestions for helping to make our world the best it can be.



Introduce the book and the concept:

Ask children 'What can you do?' Allow children to share their ideas of things they can do. If responses are all about physical abilities e.g. I can kick a ball, I can draw etc., ask children the questions 'What can we do to make people feel good? Allow them to share their ideas.

Read the book, asking questions as you go.

When you get to the page about 'We want a LOVING world. We can love our friends, learn to love ourselves, love that are families come in all shapes and sizes and try to show empathy and compassion. Ask children about the following:

- Love themselves and allow them opportunities to share why they love themselves.
- Love out friends – encourage children to explain why they love their friends, complimenting their friends.
- Love that families come in all shapes and sizes – allow children to share information about their families.
- When have you shown empathy or compassion? How did that make a person feel?

On the last page read 'If we all play our part, together we can create the world we want.' Ask children what world do they want and how can they achieve that world. Allow them to share their ideas.

Once you have read the story and discussed the main parts to the story, go back to the first page of the text. Ask the children, 'Do you see the butterfly?' As class now look through the book again, looking at all the illustrations and see if you can spot the butterfly on each page of the story. Can you find one spread where it's missing?

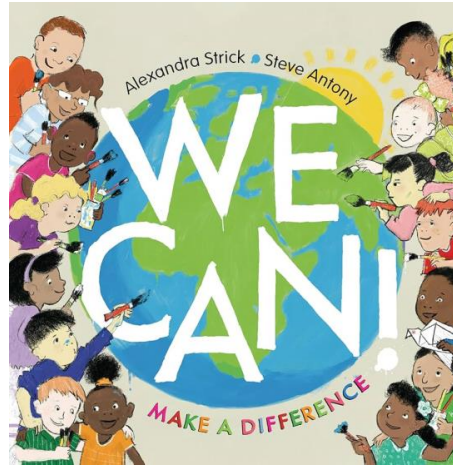
Create a school or class 'We Can' Festival

Using activities linked to the story:

Design your own class 'We Can' book cover

On a large piece of sugar paper, recreate the cover featuring every child in your class. Decide on what your strap line will say as a class. This could include every child writing down their idea and then you decide on the most popular one. (Democracy) This book says 'Make a difference.'

What will your class book say?



Placard making

Children make WE CAN placards after reading the book, using ideas from the story. These could then be used later in the day to parade around the school.

Talk activity

Pair children up and give them the the following sentence starters. Allow them to discuss in their pairs and share as a class, celebrating children's successes.

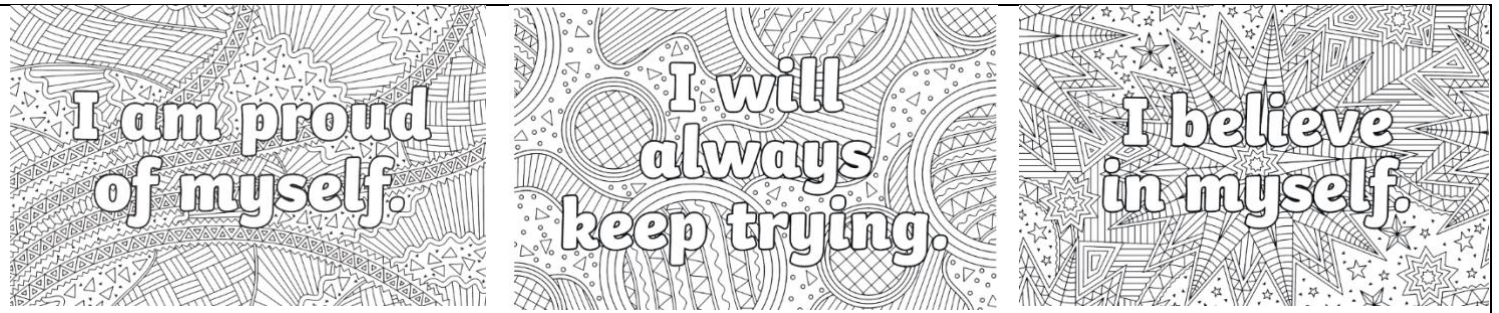
I can

You can

We can

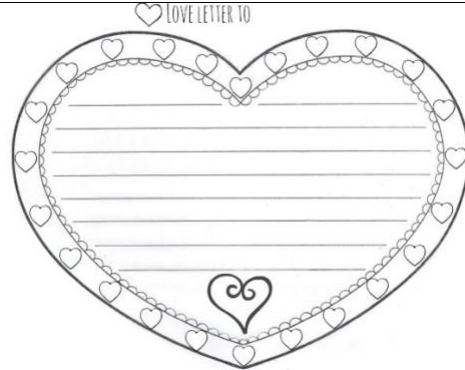
*many children may speak English as a second language. Can they say what they can do in their home language?

Mindfulness Colouring



Letter Writing

Write a letter to a friend/teacher/family member to tell them why they are special.



Kindness Postcards

Write postcards to your friends. Perhaps join up with another class to be Kindness Pals.



Kind Posters

Each child to create their own poster about being KIND but keep the letter I blank and children put a photo of themselves there to represent being the I in KIND.



I can change the world

Make an empowering message, poster or picture about each individual child can change the world with their small actions.



Yoga / breathing activities

Belly Breathing for children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RiMb2Bw4Ae8>

Dragon Breathing for children:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCL4rcWsAeE>

Breathe like a Mantra Ray:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNOiBUzPtZM>

Breathe like a bee:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5_2j5Tro6yk

Each Class or Year Group can make a corridor display of the work they have created inspired by the words 'We can.' Eg:



Dress up for Book Week or World Book Day!

WE CAN makes the perfect book for themed activity in school, using any of the above activities at any time of day or year, but also offers a great way to dress up for Children's Book Week or World Book Day, keeping things simple and equal for all families/children. All children can be provided with or asked to bring in a plain t-shirt and as a class they can paint or draw 'We can' on their t-shirts with a word that they can do to make the world a nice place to live, e.g.: We can be kind, we can be respectful, we can donate to charity, we can help others, we can support each other, we can play with everyone etc.

T-shirts can then be worn to parade around the school, along with the placards made in the earlier activity.

Book swap:

WE CAN features a page all about loving our books and sharing our books. Children can be asked to bring in a book they no longer need at home. These books will be collated and at the end of the day when children leave to go home, they can choose a new book.

After school activity with parents/carers:

A nice book making session that can involve both children and parents. Children and their parents work together to make their own 'We Can' book, celebrating all the things they can do and what we can do to make our world a better place. Try making it as a 'zig-zag' book as shown below.

