

Comprehension Questions - The Open Seat

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer each question in complete sentences.

1. Who is the new student in the story?

2. What does the cafeteria sound and smell like?

3. Where does the narrator find an empty seat?

4. Why is Maya standing in the doorway?

5. What does the narrator write on the sticky note?

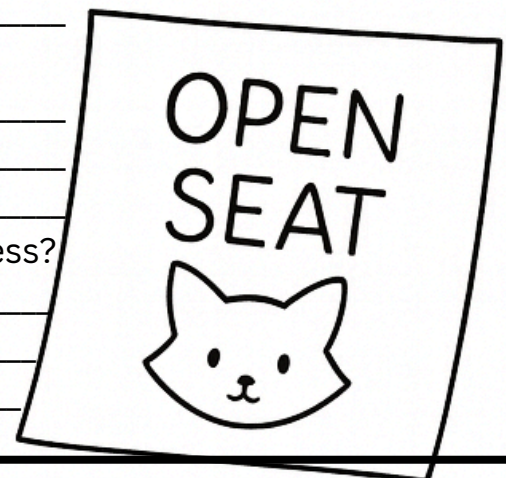
6. What food do the narrator and Maya have for lunch?

7. What animal does Maya draw on the sticky note?

8. What do Maya and the narrator do the next day?

9. How do other students respond to the signs?

10. What message does this story teach about kindness?



SEL Reflection Sheet - The Open Seat

Name: _____

Date: _____

Think about the story “The Open Seat.” It was about kindness, courage, and sharing. Now think about you.

Circle or color the faces that show how YOU felt while reading:



Answer these questions:

1. How do you think Maya felt on her first day?

 _____

2. Why did the “Open Seat” help her feel better?

 _____


3. Have you ever felt like Maya? What helped you?

 _____

4. What would you say to a new student now?

 _____

5. Let’s make a “Kindness Memory.”

 Draw a moment when you helped someone feel brave.

 Then write:

“That day, I _____

_____.

They felt _____

_____.

_____.

and I felt _____

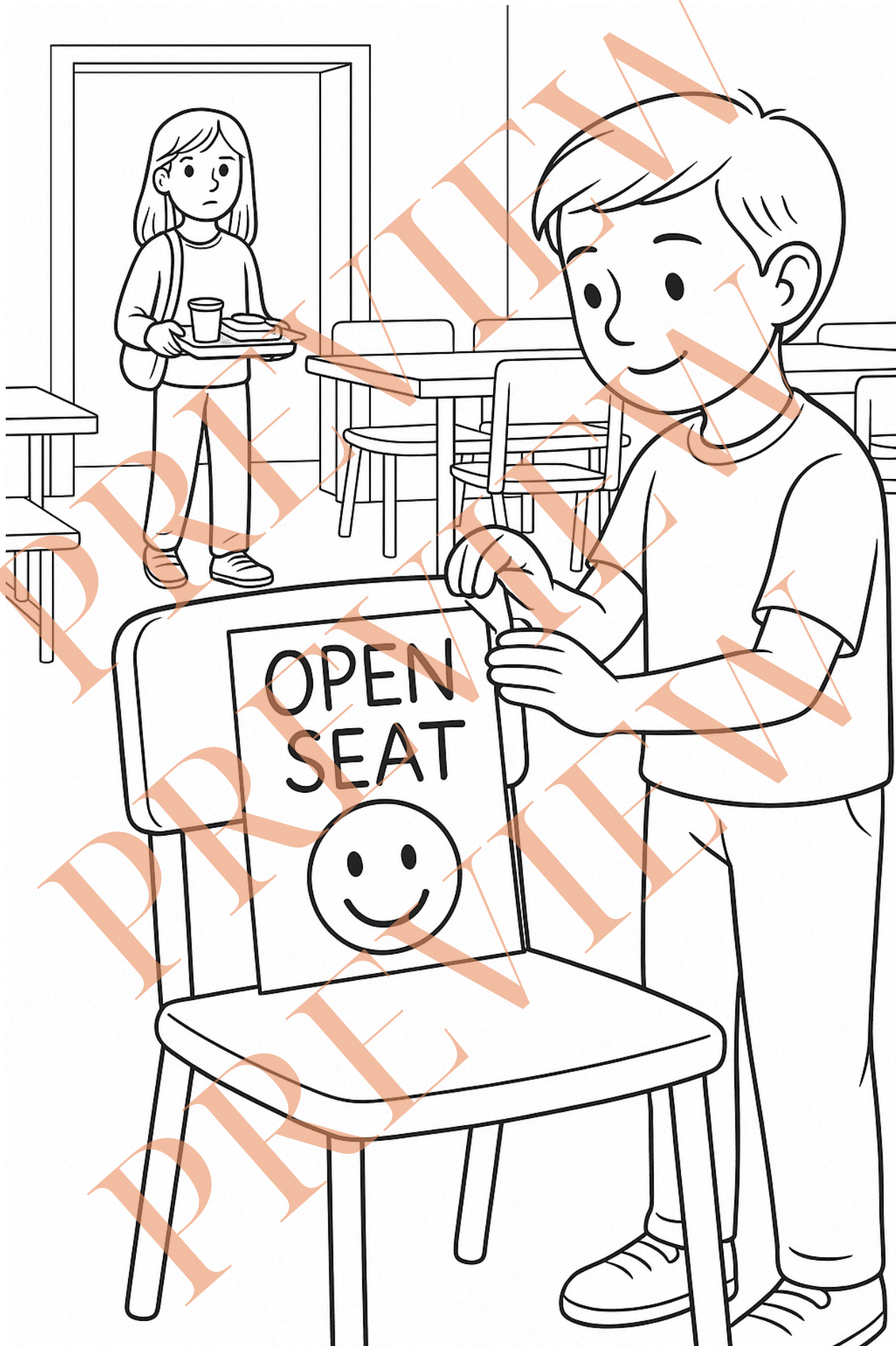
_____.

_____.”

_____.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for drawing a moment when the student helped someone feel brave.

Coloring Page



Role-Play Ideas - The Open Seat

You are part of the “Welcome Team” — a group of students who help new classmates feel at home. Get ready for your secret kindness mission!

Scene 1 — The Quiet Hello

You notice a new student standing alone in the doorway.

What will you say?

How will you show you're friendly?

Scene 2 — The Lunch Invitation

You see the new student holding a tray and looking nervous.

Create an “Open Seat” sign or sticker to invite them over.

How will you start the first conversation?

Scene 3 — Recess Connection

At recess, the new student is sitting on a bench.

What can you do to include them in play?

BONUS TASK:

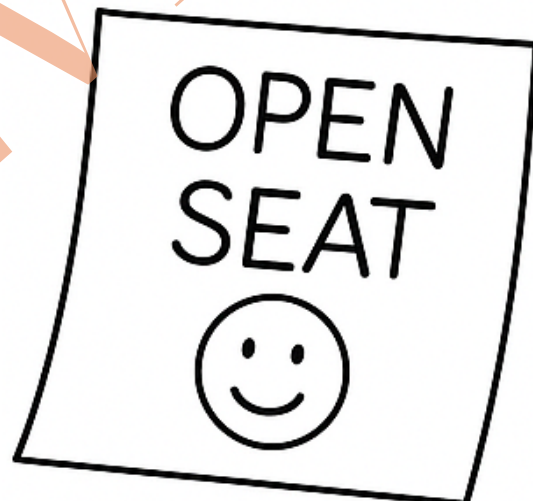
Use real-life props — a paper lunch tray, a backpack, sticky notes.

Act out your scenes in pairs or small groups.

Try using kind body language and tone of voice.

Reflect afterward:

- How did it feel to invite someone in?
- What do small actions mean to someone who feels alone?



Bonus Activity - Kindness Character Challenge

Name: _____ Date: _____

☀️ Let's imagine a friendly character who helps new kids feel safe and welcomed in school.

🎨 Draw Your Character!

Use the box below or a sticky note to draw your character.

➤ This could be an animal, magical creature, or superhero!



📝 Character Profile

Name: _____

How do they help others?

💬 Reflection Questions

1. What would your character say to someone who feels left out?

2. How does your character make others feel welcome?

📌 Next Step:

Share your character with the class and add it to the Kindness Wall!

Teacher Guide – The Open Seat

Lesson Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Understand what it feels like to be new and how to support others.
- Practice kindness and inclusion through words and actions.
- Identify ways to make others feel safe, welcome, and seen.
- Reflect on personal experiences of helping or being helped.
- Create and share kindness notes and drawings.
- Role-play real-life situations involving welcoming others.

Standards Alignment

- SEL Competencies: Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Self-Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making
- ELA Standards: Reading Comprehension, Writing, Speaking & Listening

Materials Needed

- Printable storybook “The Open Seat” (PDF)
- Comprehension questions worksheet
- SEL reflection sheet
- Writing prompt: “The Magic Open Seat”
- Role-play task cards
- Bonus printables:
- “Sticky Notes of Kindness” template
- “Kindness Character” creative page
- Coloring pages (2)
- Pencils, crayons, markers, sticky notes
- Optional: paper tray, backpack props for role-play

Lesson Plan Overview

- Warm-up: Quick discussion – “Have you ever been the new kid?” (5 min)
- Story Reading: Teacher reads The Open Seat aloud. (10 min)
- Discussion: Use comprehension and SEL questions to guide conversation. (10 min)
- Reflection: Complete SEL reflection sheet about kindness and inclusion. (10 min)
- Creative Writing: Students write “The Magic Open Seat” story and decorate. (15 min)
- Role-Play: Students act out classroom welcoming scenarios. (10–15 min)
- Bonus Activities:
- Sticky Notes of Kindness – Design and post welcoming sticky notes (10 min)
- Kindness Character Challenge – Create a mascot who welcomes others (15 min)
- Wrap-up: Share writing, notes, and drawings; post on classroom “Welcome Wall.” (5 min)