

## Activity 4

## Unity, Empathy, and Service

9/11

6<sup>TH</sup> THROUGH 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Define “unity,” “service,” and “empathy.”</li> <li>■ Reflect on personal experiences with unity, service, and empathy.</li> </ul>
<b>Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6-8.3</li> <li>■ CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6-8.4</li> <li>■ CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.6-8.1</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Journal: Unity, Empathy, and Service printable</li> </ul>
<b>Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Print a copy of Journal: Unity, Empathy, and Service printable for each student.</li> <li>■ Consider the degree to which you will address the events of September 11 with your students. This activity focuses primarily on the sense of community in the days after September 11, 2001 and the 9/11 Day movement. There are many organizations that provide excellent educational materials and resources to teach students about the events of 9/11 if you wish to go into more depth with your students.</li> <li>■ Preview the <a href="#">9/11 Day Ambassador interview with Cindy McGinty</a> to determine if and how much of it you will show students (we recommend the first 4 – 4.5 minutes).</li> </ul>
<b>Background</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tell students that 9/11 Day is a national day of service, which means helping or doing things for other people.</li> <li>■ It is also a day of remembrance, when we honor the thousands of people who died in a series of events on September 11, 2001.</li> <li>■ Point out that after September 11th, people didn’t focus about their differences; they felt connected to one another. They did kind things for each other and served their communities together.</li> </ul>
<b>Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ask students to share what they know about the events of September 11, 2001. Be prepared to provide a high-level, age-appropriate summary of the events if students are unfamiliar or have incorrect information. This might be as simple as stating that there were a series of attacks at several places in the United States in which thousands of people, including many first responders, lost their lives and many others were injured.</li> <li>■ Ask what stories they have heard about the days and weeks that followed 9/11. If students need help getting started, write the word “unity,” “service,” and “empathy” on the board. Provide simple definitions of each word: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unity – a sense of togetherness or oneness</li> <li>• Service – doing something for another person</li> <li>• Empathy – understanding or feeling what another person feels</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Introduction**  
(continued)

- Tell students that people all around the United States felt empathy for the people who were harmed and they wanted to help. There was a sense of unity; people were not focused on their differences but on their similarities. They wanted to serve others, so they lined up to give their own blood, donated money, and supplies, or volunteered to serve meals.
- Explain that 9/11 Day was created to encourage people to remember and repeat the spirit of unity and service that grew in the days after September 11.
- Time permitting, share the [9/11 Day Ambassador video interview with Cindy McGinty](#).

**Activity**

- Have students reflect in their journals by using the Journal: Unity, Empathy, and Service printable to write about times they witnessed or experienced unity, empathy, and service.
- If students have difficulty thinking of personal experiences, encourage them to reflect on the experiences Cindy McGinty described in the 9/11 Day Ambassador video (if you included it earlier).
- Ask volunteers to share one of the examples from their reflections.



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Journal: Unity, Empathy, and Service

Describe a time when you witnessed or heard about people coming together in a spirit of *unity* despite their differences.

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Describe a time when you felt *empathy* by understanding or feeling the feelings of another person.

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Give an example of an act of *service* you have seen or done yourself.

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