

SEL SPOTLIGHT

DECEMBER 2025



SEASONS GREETINGS!

This month's Ethical Habit is Empathy – the ability to understand and care about how someone else is feeling. Throughout the month, students have been learning that empathy helps us strengthen friendships, solve problems peacefully, and build a caring school community. At our HEART assemblies, our fifth grade HEART Ambassadors led our school wide discussions: what does empathy look, sound and feel like in our school community? They demonstrated these skills using original skits written by the fifth grade. Our HEART Ambassadors also launched our new School Wide Activity, growing our Empathy tree! Students will be invited to reflect on: “I can show empathy at school by...”. We also recognized students who were nominated for a Courage to be Kind Award for last month.

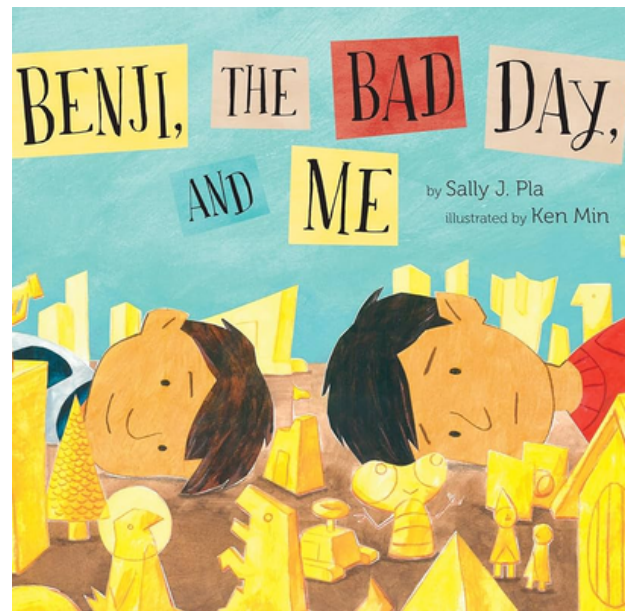
Classes read *Benji, the Bad Day, and Me* by Sally J. Pla. This touching story highlights two brothers who experience difficult moments in different ways, reminding students that we all have “bad days”—and empathy helps us support one another. Students discussed how to recognize others' feelings, how to be gentle during tough moments, and how to show kindness even when someone acts differently than we expect.

Sincerely, The SEL Team

ETHICAL HABIT OF THE MONTH:

Empathy

BOOK RECOMMENDATION:



RULER REVIEW

This month in SEL lessons, students reviewed the Meta Moment. A Meta-Moment is a brief pause we take between a triggering feeling and our response. Students learn to stop, breathe, and think before reacting, helping them make choices they can be proud of. During a Meta-Moment, children are taught to identify how they're feeling, picture their "best self," and choose a response that is calm, respectful, and helpful. An example of this might be: while playing a game a student feels upset because a classmate took a turn first. Instead of yelling or walking away, they can take a Meta-Moment—pause, take a breath, remember they want to be a kind classmate, and say, "Can I have a turn when you're done?" or they can use an i-Message and say, "I felt frustrated when you skipped my turn, next time can we talk about who goes first before we start?" This simple tool empowers students to handle strong emotions, solve conflicts, and build healthier relationships both in school and at home.



Giving Retriever

Our continued work with Giving Retriever is underway in all of our classrooms at Anne Hutch! We have had the pleasure of being visited by the Giving Retriever Puppies. During this special visit, students had the opportunity to interact with small puppies in a safe, guided setting. Working with young puppies helped students practice this month's ethical habit, *Empathy*. By learning to recognize the puppies' needs, respond gently to their cues, and understand how their own actions can affect others students have real-life experience practicing empathy. Through caring interactions—such as using calm voices, gentle touches, and patience—students strengthened important social-emotional skills, including compassion, responsibility, and respect for living beings.



Community Connections

This month our Community Connections groups did festive and fun activities together. Students built gingerbread houses, played cooperative, winter themed board games and snowmen crafts. As always, students were able to use communication skills, work together and practice teamwork!

