



Pathways to Peace

Activity Book for Elementary School



Pathways to Peace

Activity Book for Elementary School

Pathways to Peace is a celebration of students' potential to be peacemakers. The Pathways to Peace Activity Book features highlights from the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute's primary violence prevention curriculum. As the leading homicide response agency in Boston, we recognize the deep and broad impact violence can have on students at home and in the classroom.

Our approach to peace education is to acknowledge the pain of grief and loss while embracing our capacity to heal. We've created a series of discussion questions, drawing/writing exercises, and activities to engage students in social-emotional learning. These activities will help foster a culture of peace in the classroom by reinforcing positive behaviors, promoting social responsibility, and deepening relationships between students rooted in respect and compassion.

We've written Instructor Guides so that teachers feel more equipped to engage their students in material that covers murder, grief, and loss. We've also written example 45-60 minute lesson plans featuring these activities for those teachers who are able to dedicate an entire class period to peace education. You can download those materials from our website: www.ldbpeaceinstitute.org.

The Annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace is where we hope to see a large contingent of students and teachers walking to show their commitment to creating more peaceful classrooms and communities. You can find more information about the walk by visiting www.mothersdaywalk4peace.org.

The Peace Institute is available to provide educators who plan to utilize the lesson plans and activities with training and technical assistance. We're so grateful for those teachers who can make time to try on this important healing and learning opportunity. For support and additional resources, please contact Rachel@ldbpeaceinstitute.org.



Conversation Starters

Instructors can use these prompts in class to deepen their students understanding of peace.

- What is one place where you feel peaceful and calm?

- What does peace mean to you?

- What does being peaceful feel like?

- Who are peaceful people in your life?

- What goes on inside us that make it hard to be peaceful?

- What makes it hard for people to be peaceful with others?

- What Principle of Peace means the most to you? (Principles of Peace can be found at the end of the activity book)

- What is one way you can work toward peace?



Writing/Drawing Exercises

Peace Ribbon

This is a quick and easy activity to engage students in thinking about what peace means to them.

The instructor will pass out the Peace Ribbon worksheet (please find the worksheet at the end of the activity book) and ask students to decorate the ribbon with peaceful images and words. They can choose to give the ribbon to a peacemaker in their life or hang them in the classroom to celebrate Peace.

Peace is Possible Worksheet

This activity will allow students to express peaceful, positive thoughts.

Ask students to illustrate one of the seven Principles of Peace. Students may use any words, pictures, or symbols they connect with that principle. (Please find the worksheet at the end of this activity book)

- What principle is most important to you? What does it look like? How do you show or see that principle? Which principle can you work on?

Recognizing feelings

This activity will increase student's awareness of how we express our feelings.

The instructor will pass out a face chart to each student. The instructor will ask students to pick a feeling and draw a facial expression that represents the feeling. Then the teacher will ask students to share their pictures and the rest of the class can guess what feeling the student drew. (Please find the worksheet at the end of this activity book)

- What feeling do you think the face is showing? Why do you think so?

Note: *Feelings can look different on different people! You can share with students that recognizing feelings is a skill that helps us treat others with kindness and compassion. It is also important for us to recognize that the feelings we have on the inside show on the outside and affect how others interact with us.*



Vision of a Peaceful Community

This activity will help students reflect on the strengths, assets, and resilience of their own community.

Instructors will put students into groups of 3-4 and give each group a large blank piece of paper. The instructor will ask each group to work together to draw what they imagine a peaceful, happy community looks like. The instructor can give students some ideas to help them:

- People working together
- People sharing
- People having fun and celebrating each other.

When students are finished with their drawings, the instructor will ask each group to hang up their posters all together like a peace mural so everyone can see each other's work.

Hands of Peace

This activity will help students express their own potential to be peacemakers.

The instructor will pass out paper and drawing utensils to students. The instructor will ask students to trace one hand on the piece of paper. This is a helping hand for their fellow students! Students will draw and/or write on the hands ways they could help another student or help make their classroom a more peaceful place. The instructor should encourage students to make their hand unique and think of a special thing about themselves they can share with others when they are having a hard time.

The instructor should allow time for sharing so students can appreciate each other's work. This could be one by one or hanging up the pictures and letting students walk around and look at each other's work in a "gallery walk."



Activities

Stand up for Peace

This activity will teach students the Seven Principles of Peace: love, unity, hope, faith, courage, justice, and forgiveness.

The instructor will write up the seven Principles of Peace or pass out the Principles of Peace Handout (please see the end of the activity book for this hand out).

For each principle the instructor will:

- Read the principle then ask all students to say the principle aloud together.
- Read the definition
- Ask 1-2 students to define the principle in their own words or give an example of how someone might show that principle.
- Ask students to stand up if they believe in the principle then ask 1-2 students why they believe in the principle.
- Be seated to hear the next principle.

Pass the Pulse

This activity will help students feel connected to each other. It works well as a warm-up!

The instructor will ask students to form a circle and hold hands. The object of the game is to silently pass the pulse from person to person so that the pulse gets all the way through the group. When you receive a squeeze on one side, you will then squeeze the person's hand on your other side. Don't add any extra pulses!

- First the instructor will do a single pulse in one direction and wait for it to get all the way around
- Then the instructor will send a double pulse in the opposite direction and wait for it to get all the way around
- Then the instructor will send a pulse both directions at the same time
- For an extra challenge the instructor can send two different pulses in opposite directions

Note: *Remind students that this activity should be done silently. Lead by example and take the hands of the students next to you so everyone feels comfortable holding hands. You can ask students what they noticed or enjoyed about the activity after it's over. The message of this activity is that we are all interconnected and depend on each other.*

Heartbeats

This is a simple activity that works well as a close out before the end of class.

The instructor will ask students to form a circle, and then use their use their right hand to tap the beat of their heartbeat on their chest in unison.



Feelings Words

This activity will build students' capacity to name and identify feelings.

The instructor will lead a brainstorm to come up with as many feelings as the classroom can. The instructor will write the feelings on a poster or on the board.

- What are some feelings that you have felt? What feelings do you know of?
- How do you feel today?

When the class has come up with a list of feelings, ask for a few volunteers to share some examples of these core feelings:

- When do you feel sad?
- When do you feel happy?
- When do you feel scared?
- When do you feel mad?
- When do you feel peaceful?
- When do you feel proud?

Note: *If students are feeling hesitant or struggling to come up with examples, it can be inspiring if you offer personal examples first. Encourage students to be honest. Draw connections between students' responses to show commonality and normalize feelings. Identifying shared experience will help students develop empathy with their classmates*

Responding to Feelings

This activity will help students think about the consequences of their actions.

The instructor will ask the class to listen to some scenarios. The instructor will pick one side of the space to represent "Agree" and the other side of the space to represent "Disagree." After the instructor reads the scenario, they will ask the students to go stand on the "Agree" if they would handle the situation the same way or "Disagree" if they would handle the situation in a different way. The instructor should ask for a few volunteers to share why they agree/disagree and what they could do differently after each scenario.

- You are in line for lunch and another student cuts in front of you. You are so mad you push them out of the way to keep your spot.
- Your friend takes a marker that you were using to do your work. You told them it made you angry because they didn't ask first and then asked them to return the marker so you could finish the assignment.
- You notice another student is sad and crying. You tease them for being a baby.

Note: *It is important to share with students that there are no "right" feelings and "wrong" feelings—all feelings are valid. We must learn to take responsibility for our actions no matter how we feel. This activity can also be done by asking students to stand up or raise their hands if they agree. Feel free to add additional scenarios that are relevant to your class/school. Ask students to name the consequences and impact of choosing to use violent behavior to resolve the situation. The goal of the activity is to affirm that students always have a choice about how to act and to start a conversation about peaceful ways to respond to conflict.*



Caring for Our Classmates

This activity allows students to learn how to show kindness and consideration to others.

The instructor will ask students to stand up so we can act out having peaceful, positive attitudes. The instructor will read an example and ask all students to use their faces and bodies to act it out. The instructor will ask the students to look around at each other to see what they notice about positive attitudes.

- How do you show someone you are excited to see them?
- How do you show someone you are listening to what they're saying?
- How would you show someone you are calm during a disagreement with a friend?
- How would you show someone that you are concerned if they are sad?
- How would you show someone who just won a game or an award that you are happy for them?

Then the instructor will ask students to sit down and reflect on the activity.

- How did people's faces and bodies look when then they had a positive attitude?

Note: *Students may need some extra encouragement to take the risk of acting out positive attitudes. It's helpful when all students do the activity at the same time so no one feels alone. Encourage students to do the activity quietly and notice what others are doing. It is very helpful to students to model active participation by doing the activity with them. Reflecting on the activity afterward will help students internalize what they experienced.*

Practicing Compassion

This activity will help students learn how to show other students kindness, and how their own needs might be the same or different than their classmates.

The instructor will talk to students about compassion, which means caring about how others feel and showing them care. The instructor will ask students to share their thoughts:

- What could someone do to support you when you feel sad? What are some things you don't like when you're sad?
- What could someone do to help you when you are struggling with your work? What are some things you don't like when you're struggling?
- How could someone show they care when you are going through a tough time? What are some things you don't like when you're going through a tough time?
- How can you find out what someone else needs to feel better?

Note: *Call on 2-3 people per question, hopefully new people for each question. Encourage students to be specific and follow up with students by asking, "How could this happen in our classroom?" Name that it is absolutely okay for students to have different likes and dislikes; support is not one-size-fits all. In fact, this is a great moment to have students reflect on the importance of naming our needs and listening to what other students need.*



Tone of voice

This activity helps students think about how their tone of voice affects how they communicate.

The instructor will ask students to repeat the phrase “I’m a peaceful person” together out loud in different tones of voice to explore how our tone can affect what we mean.

- Excited
- Angry
- Scared
- Mean
- Friendly

Then the instructor will ask students to reflect on the activity.

- What did you hear when your classmates changed their tone of voice? How did it feel when you changed your tone?

Note: *Encourage students to be loud and be heard during the activity. You may want to do a “1, 2, 3” countdown so students can feel confident they will all be doing the activity together. The lesson for young people is our tone of voice has to match our message.*

The Louis D. Brown Story

This activity will allow students to learn about how a family from their community dealt with grief and loss. The story of Louis D. Brown was written explicitly for elementary school-aged children.

The instructor should read students the story of Louis D. Brown and how his parents started the Peace Institute. (Please find this story at the end of the activity book).

Then the instructor can ask the students some thinking questions about the story:

- What kind of person was Louis? How did he help other people?
- How does what happened to Louis make you feel? How do you think his family felt when he died?
- Have you ever lost someone close to you? How did you feel? How did you act?
- What did Louis’ family do to keep his memory alive? How does the Peace Institute help the community?

Note: *Reactions to the story may vary depending on student’s personal experiences developmental stage. Remind students to be kind and considerate of other student’s feelings in the ways you’ve discussed in previous lessons. If a student has a significant reaction, be prepared to make a referral so the student can receive extra support. A key part of Louis’ story is the way his family has carried on his legacy and committed their lives to peacemaking. While Louis’ story is tragic, it is also an invitation to all of us to use our grief in positive ways to honor the memory of loved ones we’ve lost.*



Mother's Day Walk for Peace Fundraising

This activity gives students the opportunity to be active participants in the Annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace.

The instructor should explain the Mother's Day Walk for Peace to students. The Mother's Day Walk for Peace was started 20 years ago by Clementina Chery to honor the memory of her son Louis who was killed. She wanted to start a walk where all families who lost someone could come together to remember their loved ones, support each other, and show the city that peace is possible. The Mother's Day Walk is now a very important tradition in the city that expresses unity and hope.

The instructor can lead a brainstorm with students about ways they support the Mother's Day Walk for Peace, or choose one of these ways and lead the project with students:

- Decorate cans to collect change to donate to the walk
- Pass out envelopes to collect money from family and friends to give to the walk
- Make signs and posters with messages of peace to decorate the walk route
- Come up with peace chants for the walk
- Create a team and commit to walking together as a class

If the class doesn't have the capacity to walk in the Annual Mother's Day Walk for Peace, the instructor can lead students in discussion about community service.

- What ways can elementary school students work for peace at school? At home?
- Besides the Walk for Peace, what other positive community events do you know about?





The Principles of Peace

FAITH	Complete trust in someone or something
HOPE	Believing in yourself, someone, or something
JUSTICE	Treating everyone fairly and equitably
LOVE	Showing care for yourself and others
FORGIVENESS	Moving past something that was done wrong to you
COURAGE	Having strength to do something you are afraid of
UNITY	Staying connected with each other



Peace Is Possible for the Next Generation

With love | unity | faith | hope | courage | justice | forgiveness

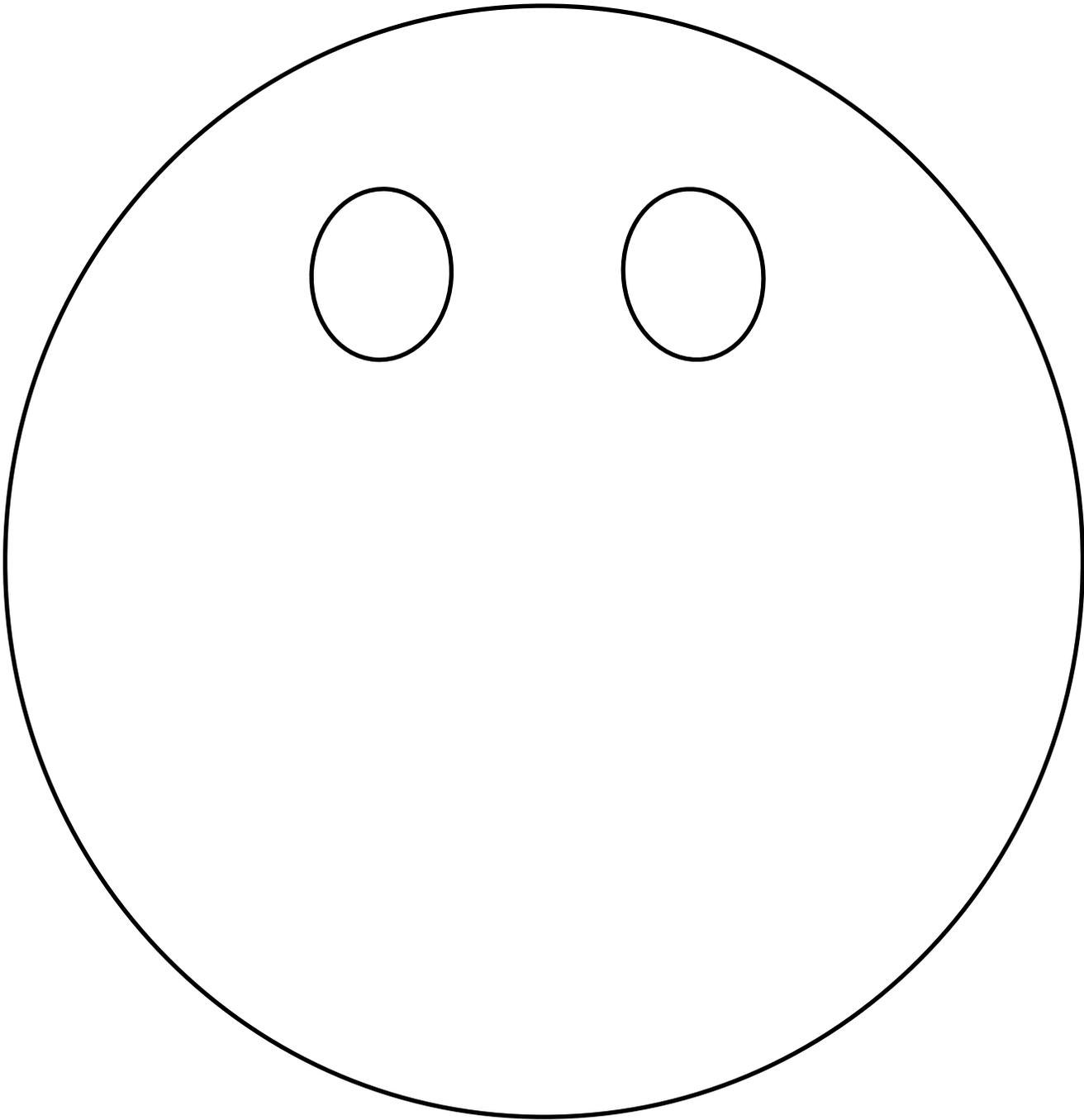


Center of Teaching Healing and Learning - www.cotl.org
Copyright © by the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. All rights reserved.

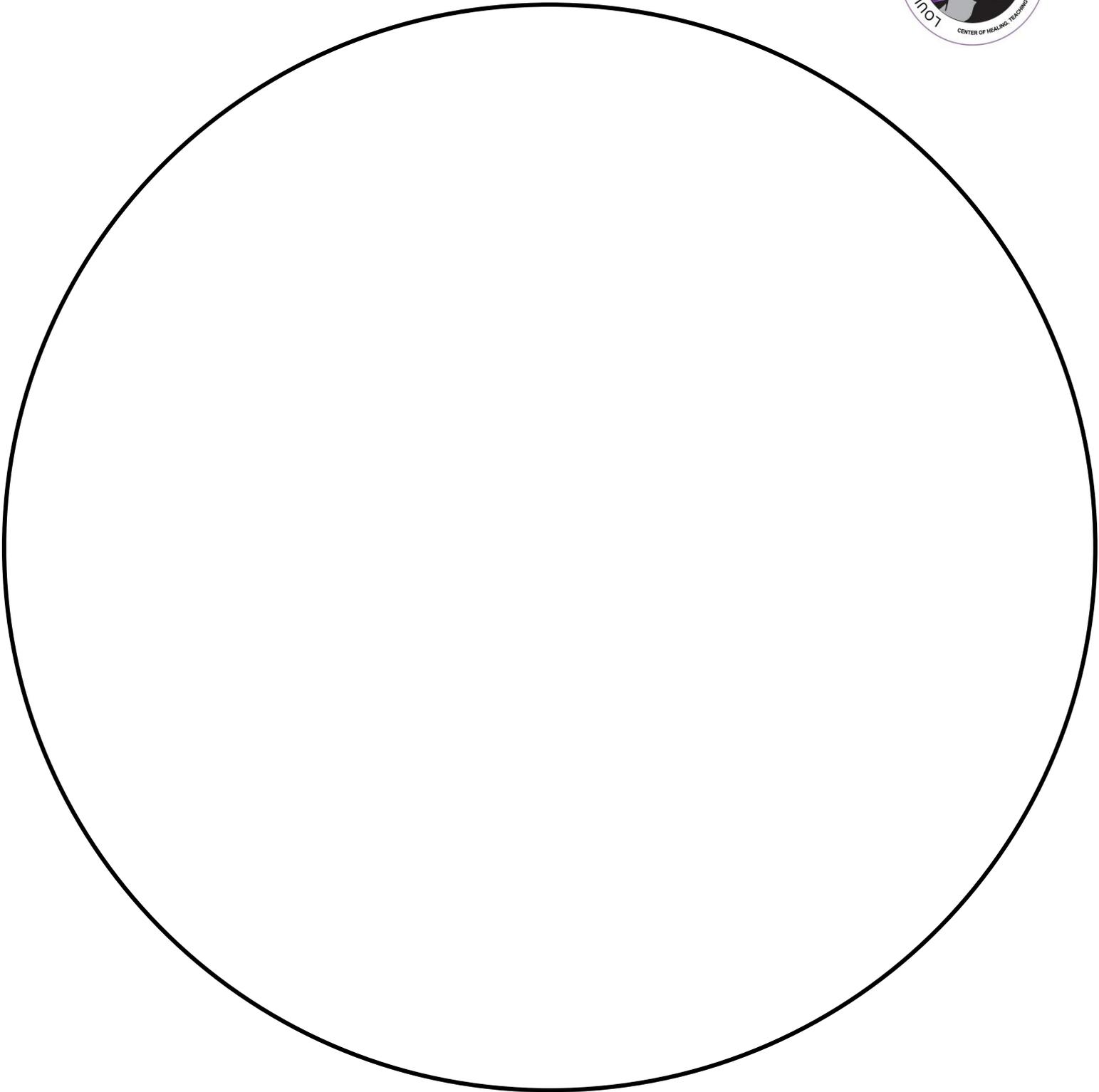
NAME: _____



Face Chart



Peace Month



Louis D. Brown Story – Elementary School Version

Louis D. Brown was a young man who grew up in Dorchester. He went to West Roxbury High School and was determined to go far in life—he planned to go to college, graduate school, and get a PhD. He dreamed of becoming President of the United States.

Louis loved his family and loved to play with his younger sister Allie and his baby brother Allen. Louis liked to play video games, read, and eat Chinese food. Louis did very well in school, though he sometimes struggled with other kids teasing him for being a “nerd.” Louis did not let that stop him from getting good grades.

Louis was also very committed to his community. He wanted to be a peacemaker and for everyone to be safe in their neighborhoods. It made Louis sad that some people felt like they needed to carry guns or knives to solve problems. He thought that people should protect each other and try to solve their problems by talking rather than killing. Louis joined Teens Against Gang Violence and worked with other young people to make the community safer.

One day when Louis was walking through his neighborhood to a meeting, he was caught in the middle of an argument. Then people started shooting. Louis was shot and he died. Louis was only 15 years old.

Louis’ parents and friends cried a lot when Louis was killed. They still cry sometimes. Louis’ brother and sister had to grow up without him, and they miss him very much. Louis was killed near Christmas time, so his family thinks of him a lot during the holidays.

Louis’ family decided they had to keep working for peace because that’s what Louis wanted. His family created the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute. The Peace Institute teaches people the Principles of Peace and ways to live more peacefully. The Peace Institute also helps families who have lost family members to murder so they can heal from their loss. Every year, the Peace Institute holds the Mother’s Day Walk for Peace and thousands of people from all over the state come together as a symbol of unity and hope that everyone can grow up to live their dreams.

Louis’ family continues to work hard for peace. They want all of us to join them in working to make our schools and communities peaceful places.

