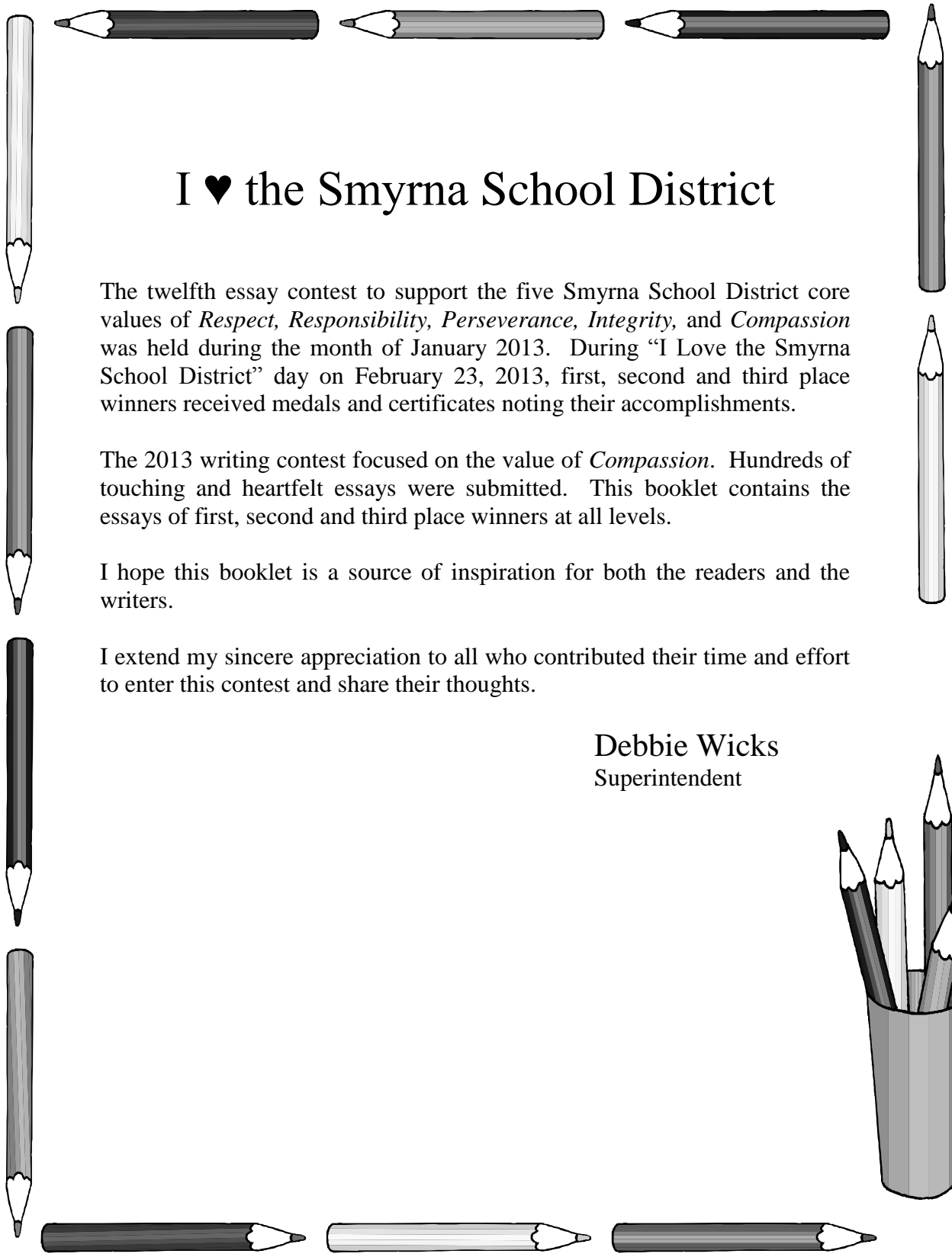


Smyrna School District

Essay Contest

2013

Student Winners



## I ♥ the Smyrna School District

The twelfth essay contest to support the five Smyrna School District core values of *Respect, Responsibility, Perseverance, Integrity, and Compassion* was held during the month of January 2013. During “I Love the Smyrna School District” day on February 23, 2013, first, second and third place winners received medals and certificates noting their accomplishments.

The 2013 writing contest focused on the value of *Compassion*. Hundreds of touching and heartfelt essays were submitted. This booklet contains the essays of first, second and third place winners at all levels.

I hope this booklet is a source of inspiration for both the readers and the writers.

I extend my sincere appreciation to all who contributed their time and effort to enter this contest and share their thoughts.

Debbie Wicks  
Superintendent

For the thirteenth annual “I Love the Smyrna School District” essay contest, students were asked to write about *Compassion*, a core district value. Contest rules and writing prompt were disseminated to students (via their teachers) in December 2012. June Wicks, district reading coordinator, prepared the prompt and assisted with coordinating the essay contest. Jamie Cox, Smyrna School District Curriculum Office secretary, completed the typing and formatting of the publication and assisted with the layout and editing of the publication. Alexander “Sandy” Shalk, Ed.D. conducted the contest and edited the final publication. District teachers encouraged their students to write and helped select essays. Appreciation is extended to all for their time and effort in making this publication possible.

## ESSAY CONTEST

Contestants are asked to write a maximum 500-word essay on the following topic:

*Compassion* is having sympathy for others, often including a desire to help. For example, someone might show compassion to a person who has gotten bad news and try to help them.

Your school is having a writing contest. Use the writing prompt and questions below to help you craft a writing piece for the contest.

People often help each other. **Tell a true story** about a time when one person helped another, or when a group of people worked together to provide someone help.

**STUDENT WINNERS:** First (gold), second (silver), and third (bronze) place winners are selected at each grade level (K-12) in each building. Winners receive medals and certificates noting their accomplishments. All winners were recognized during the “I Love the Smyrna School District” day (February 23, 2013).

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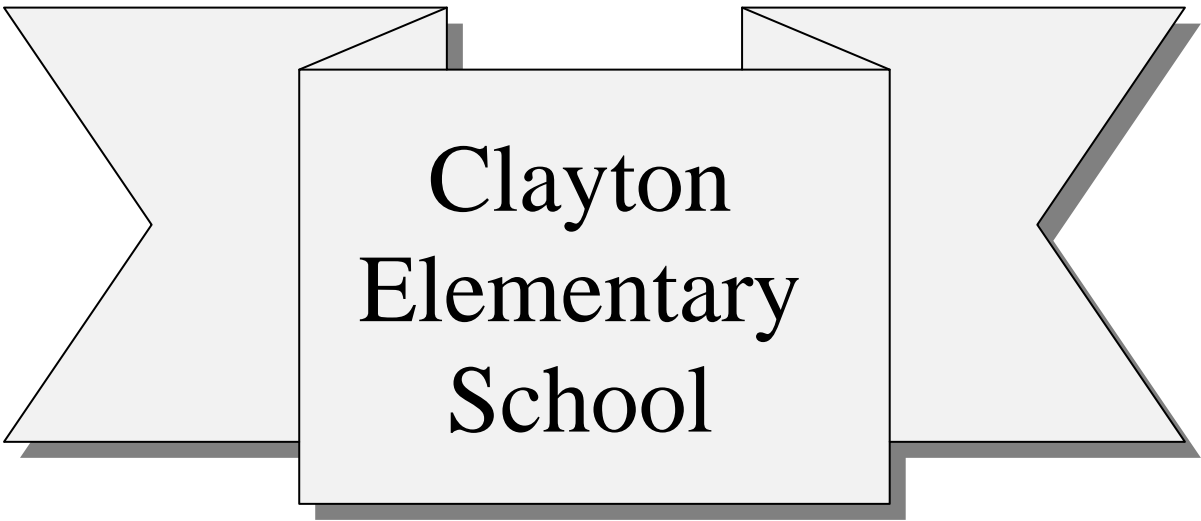
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*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

My Dad has compassion. He took me to the doctor when my head split open. He bought medicine on my infected boo-boo. I love my Dad.

Gabriel Bailey  
First Place, Kindergarten

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My brother Anthony showed compassion. He helps me when I was sick and he gave me toast. It made me feel better.

Isabella Buscemi  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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Anna shows compassion. She helped me find my ring. When I get hurt Anna helps me get up. Anna is a good friend to me.

Briana Kalb  
Third Place, Kindergarten

\*\*\*\*\*

Do you know how my Mom Mom shows compassion? My Mom Mom takes care of my treat grandmom who is not well. My Mom Mom takes care of me and my sister. She helps to take care of my family when we need her. I am so happy my Mom Mom takes care of us!

Hailey McCutchan  
First Place, Grade 1

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Do you know what compassion is? Compassion is when somebody helps people. My sister is compassionate by helping dogs, cats, and other animals. My sister loves animals because she helps them. My sister helped a dog by saving its life! She saved it by picking it up from the road! My sister is a great help for animals!

Alina Bartlett  
Second Place, Grade 1

\*\*\*\*\*

My Mom shows compassion by caring for me! My Mom is caring for me and she cooks me food! Compassion is caring for people or animals. My mom shows compassion by caring for and helping me. My Mom loves me a lot. That is how my Mom shows compassion.

Jamisen Dean  
Third Place, Grade 1



\*\*\*\*\*

Compassion is being kind to others. Compassion is being nice to all of the people around you. Compassion looks like people being nice to everyone around them. Compassion is saying nice things to everyone. Compassion is important because it makes people happy. Compassion is important because it makes people feel good. A world without compassion would have a lot of chaos. Everyone would be doing mean things. My stepdad is compassionate. When I cry or am feeling sad he helps me and makes me feel better. One night when I could not sleep or stop crying my stepdad helped me feel better by talking to me about it. Finally I stopped crying and went to sleep. Thanks to him I got some sleep and was ready to go to school in the morning. Everyone should be compassionate.

Hannah Heverin  
First Place, Grade 2

\*\*\*\*\*

Compassion is having sympathy for others often including a desire to help. Our church collects money to help people in different countries. Every Sunday our church collects ten dollars in a basket. We do this because we need money for our missionaries to provide and spread God's word. We ship our money to India, Turkey, and Cambodia. The money is used for their children's schools and education. I love showing compassion a lot! Don't you?

Karalyn Osborne  
Second Place, Grade 2

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Compassion is an act of kindness! My 8 year old friend from Clayton showed compassion once. I really needed help! I was sitting alone with no one to play with. When she asked me to play I was so happy so I said yes! It made my friend happy too because she knew I was not lonely any more. Have YOU ever shown compassion to a friend once? Let's talk more.

Jordan Myrick  
Third Place, Grade 2

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To me compassion is showing someone you care. It's healing the sick and comforting the sad. Its helping and caring. That's what compassion is. To me there is only one person in the world who acts that way. She is my best friend Sierra.

One day I was feeling sad. I was also feeling frustrated and mad but my friend Sierra helped me get over it. She comforted me, but before I can tell you that story, I have to tell you this story.

Sierra can be compassionate to her brother. Her brother has special needs so she helps him. She helps him to know how to speak and move around. That gives him a smile on his face. That's one reason Sierra shows compassion, but I still have two more.

Sierra can show compassion by helping her sister, Summer, with her problems. Some of Summer's problems are like hard homework. Sierra helps her try to understand the problems on the work. She will talk to her and if she is sad Sierra will comfort Summer. That was the second reason she shows compassion. Now for the third.

One time I couldn't go to a dance because I needed a friend to go with me. I asked a friend at school but the person couldn't go. When I got on the bus I told Sierra about it. She comforted me. She talked to me about it. She even volunteered to go with me. She showed me real compassion.

Now you know how Sierra shows compassion. There are still many more ways she shows compassion to me and other people. Maybe you could show compassion just like Sierra. I have learned much from her and she has taught me how to be compassionate. That's how Sierra is compassionate, and as I said, you could try to be compassionate too.

Isabel Wilson  
First Place, Grade 3

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Do you know what it means if someone is compassionate? Well, what it means to me is if someone is having a bad day help them and show them you care. The person who is compassionate in my life is my brother Dylan.

He is compassionate because he cares when something happens to somebody. The first reason I picked him is because at Smyrna High School they had a cancer night and you got to run laps for patients. Every lap you got a bead and raised money. He ran 15 laps and raised a bunch of money. I'm sure all the kids that got money to help them are soooo grateful. That's why I picked him for that reason. The last reason why I picked Dylan is because he had an event at school where he could wear pink and buy things to support cancer. That money goes to the hospital with sick patients. He chose to participate. He bought a lot of stuff which went to the hospital. The people that got the money are probably very happy.

Those are all three reasons why I picked him and that's why he's compassionate. He told me how to be a better person. I will follow in his footsteps. When I grow up I want to be just like him.

Kalissa Andruzzi  
Second Place, Grade 3

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Do you know what compassion is? Compassion is when someone helps another person with their words or actions. I saw compassion when my dog Rocky died. My Dad and Mom Mom helped me feel better by showing me compassion. Compassion is something everyone should show.

Compassion is when we do something good for one another, like being kind and nice. The one time someone showed compassion to me is when my dog Rocky died. Everybody said it was ok, but I didn't think that it was. Rocky was my Pop Pop's dog and he was a chocolate lab. He got his name because he was as strong as a rock.

My dog was important to me because we grew up together. When I was a baby, he was a puppy and he had a tail as small as my pinkie. My dog was always my best friend. He was the nicest buddy a boy could ever have and I will never have a better friend than Rocky. He always had a great sense of humor. He would just flop on the ground like a rag doll to make us laugh. He ran around like a maniac sometimes and would get into trouble, but he sure did know how to have fun. My favorite memory of Rocky was when he had to go to the vet. We couldn't get him in the truck. He wouldn't budge. He just stood there like a statue. Finally, we had to drag him by his collar. I really wish he would have cooperated, but I couldn't blame him for not wanting to get his shots!

Before he got sick Rocky was very playful. It was hard to see him feel so bad. My Dad told me he needed surgery and then he need to be put to sleep forever. I thought I would never stop crying. He was my best friend.

My Dad showed me compassion by telling me it was ok and giving me hugs when I needed them. My Mom Mom showed me compassion by finding me a tiny new little puppy. This was incredibly important to me because I didn't want to be sad anymore and it made me feel a lot better.

My new dog is a lot like my other dog but he is fluffier and black. He can never replace my friend Rocky, but Smokey is a lot of fun too, and my new best friend. I am a lot happier now that I have a buddy again thanks to the compassion my Dad and Mom Mom showed. You should always show compassion because it makes people who feel sad, feel better.

Isaac Tyre  
Third Place, Grade 3

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What do you think of when you hear the word compassion? Do you think of having sympathy for others, including a desire to help? Well, if that's what you think, then you're right! Compassion looks like a kid standing up for another kid. Compassion is very important to have because if you don't have it the world would be a very bad world and no one will be nice and kind at all. It also includes feeling bad for others and wanting to help them. That is why I am going to talk about a man who showed sympathy and compassion throughout his life, Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. wanted to make a difference in others lives. He wanted to make life fair for blacks and whites. He felt bad that blacks were mistreated, plus he was a black. He didn't just want to stand up for blacks; he wanted to stand up for everyone! He did everything he could to make the black and white rights the same. So he gave a lot of speeches and even though he got shot, stabbed, and put in jail, he still believed that everyone should have the same rights.

Finally they let blacks and whites do things together. So now everyone has their own rights because of Dr. King's efforts.

That's how Martin Luther King Jr. showed compassion, now you can too.

Madalynne Balcerak  
First Place, Grade 4

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Have you ever seen anyone show compassion? Have you even shown compassion yourself? Well, I'm here to show you how some people showed compassion!

One day, I was watching the Disney Channel and Friends for Change, when I saw actress, Debby Ryan, talking about the Red Cross helping victims of Hurricane Sandy! I thought that everyone participating was very kind and was showing that they cared. They all had so much compassion to show! The Red Cross volunteers made a plan and a first-aid kit in case someone needed medical help or support. When you think about someone showing compassion, do you think of people helping victims that couldn't live in their home anymore, just because of something that the Mother Earth caused? Well, I think helping restore homes is a huge way of showing compassion! If you were a victim, would you like to see the big red and white Red Cross trucks driving around to help victims?

How about if you didn't have that many toys with which to play? Wouldn't it be great to find out that the Disney Channel, Friends for Change, donated some sports gear for you to play with in your free time? For example, the Disney Channel, Friends for Change volunteers donated items like baseball bats, baseball gloves, soccer balls, volleyballs, basketballs, tennis rackets, and tennis balls!

Debby Ryan also went all the way to India to help build a schoolhouse! Ms. Ryan also helped teach the children too! When you think of compassion, do you think of someone who helps the victims of "Super Storm Sandy," or someone who goes all the way to India to help build a schoolhouse? Well, I think so. Debby Ryan, Friends for Change actress, loves to save the planet, makes the world a better place which definitely shows compassion!

Devin Williams  
Second Place, Grade 4

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On the way to school or anywhere else, do you see people showing compassion? I am going to tell you what I think compassion means. To me compassion means to help others who are in need and to do it not because you have to but because you want to. You can show compassion pretty easily. You could either raise money for charity, or you could donate your time, clothes that don't fit you anymore, food, toys, or even money.

It doesn't matter how you show compassion, what really matters is that you try your best to even show a little bit of compassion once in awhile. Anyone can show compassion, your teacher

could show compassion, or SPCA volunteers could also show compassion. Sometimes people show compassion and they don't even realize they showed compassion.

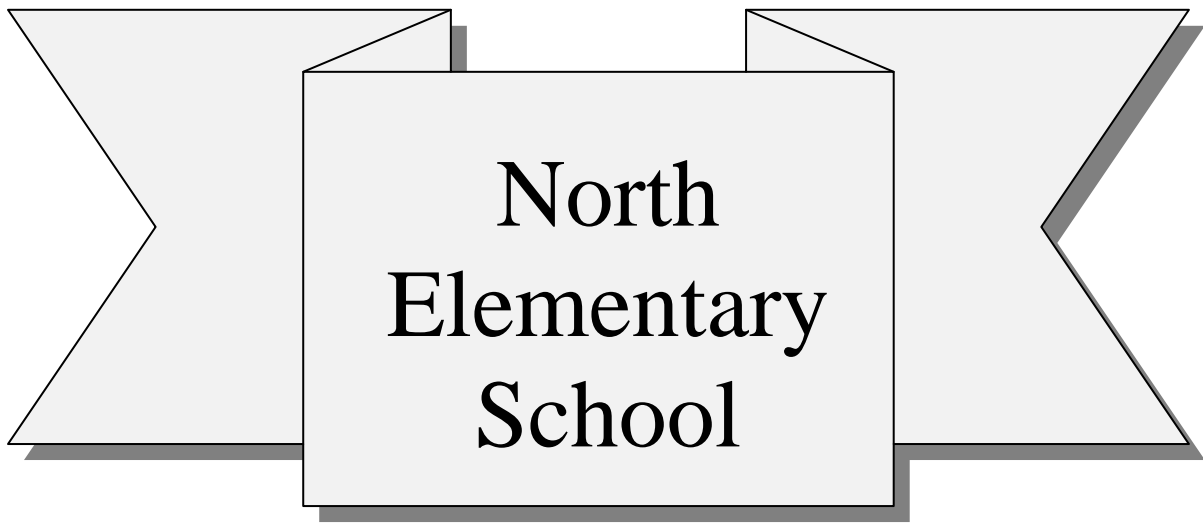
Helping an injured friend or family member is just one way to show compassion for others. Last year during hurricane Irene my mom was bringing pillows down to where I was sleeping. The next thing I know I heard this noise. I opened my eyes, and I saw my mom had fallen down the stairs! About two days later when the hurricane was over we went to the walk in clinic. Turns out she had sprained her ankle. She had to use crutches and an air cast for about three to five days.

There are things she asked my sisters and I to help her with. We took turns, when it was my turn, I brought food to her. I also helped her up and down the stairs. I pretty much got anything she needed or what she asked for. I was pretty excited when it was my turn because I knew I was helping someone in need. I know if I had sprained my ankle my mom would do what I'm doing for her.

How do you think the world would look like without compassion? I think the world would be a cruel place. People would only care about themselves and would not want to help each other. There would be more people without food and shelter. I hope you enjoyed my story and I hope you can show compassion and write about what you did like I did.

Rachel Youngcourt  
Third Place, Grade 4

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*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

My mom is compassionate because she helps me wipe my tears away.

Lebert Buchanan  
First Place, Kindergarten

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My sister is compassionate because she helps me when I got hurt.

Meghan Bowers  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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My cousin is compassionate because he helped me when I fell on the sidewalk.

Ella Carter  
Third Place, Kindergarten

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What does compassion look like? Compassion looks like someone saving people and animals. My dad is a fireman and he saves people. He helps me. He loves me. He rides the ambulance to help people. He takes people to the hospital to make them feel better. He is my dad and his name is Shawn. He goes fishing with me, and he takes me swimming. He shows compassion, and I love him.

Roarie Glenn-Russum  
First Place, Grade 1

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Are you a compassionate person? My brother Jason shows compassion. One time, he helped me up when I fell down on the ground. Another time he helped me out when I was crying and I had stepped on some glass. He helped me up before I put my other foot on the glass. I love my brother. He makes me happy!

Tiana Tribbett  
Second Place, Grade 1

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Someone who is really nice shows compassion. We show compassion by helping someone up. Compassion is important because a world without compassion is destructive. These are my heroes: Sinae, Dakota, Mom, Mrs. Bowser, Dad, my sister, my brother, and Cameron.

Dakota shows compassion by using nice words. My mom shows compassion by making me dinner. My dad shows compassion by caring about me. My brother shows compassion by

playing with me. My sister shows compassion by being nice to me. Mrs. Bowser shows compassion by teaching me. Sinae shows compassion by helping me up. The most compassionate person I know is Cameron. He is kind by helping me up when I fall. He uses nice words. He lets me play with him. He helps me clean up.

Finally, compassion is like Valentine's Day.

Talon Buckson  
Third Place, Grade 1

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My grandmother, Maude, once helped an old lady cross the street. I thought it was really nice, especially because that lady was handicapped. She is compassionate to many different people and I hope I will be like her when I grow up! It is nice to have a grandmother like her. She is kind and caring to others. She helps people when they're sad. She even makes me happy when I'm hurt. She is the best grandma ever. I hope that the people she helps feel good, because right now, I feel good for them. I love her very much and I think that what she's doing is important for the people who are sick or hurt. She makes me happy whenever my sister breaks my toys.

My grandmother is very compassionate.

Kaelin Donavon  
First Place, Grade 2

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My mom is the best because she takes care of me and kisses me when I'm sad. I think she is the most compassionate person. She is very helpful and very caring to people. She is the best mom in the world. My mom helps my cousins in Jamaica that need clothes. Sometimes I think she should be the president. She also helps people in the hospital. She is a nurse. That is why I think she is a compassionate person.

Leila Thomas  
Second Place, Grade 2

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My friend, Mr. Bruce, once went all over the country to help people hit by Hurricane Sandy. Everyone from my old school helped to make a welcome back banner! I am good friends with his daughter, plus he was in the army. Mr. Bruce is the best!

My dad is also good friends with him and so is my aunt. He works at my old school as a janitor. Mr. Bruce is my favorite person. When he helped people from Hurricane Sandy, it made me feel good to know someone as generous as him.

Donovan Clark  
Third Place, Grade 2



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Do you know why compassion is important? Well... Let's see why. Hi, my name is Nora and I am going to tell you about compassion.

What is compassion? Compassion is when you are kind or when you help someone do something. What does compassion look like you say? Well, compassion is when you see someone sad and you want to help them out. An example is when someone falls and you help them get up. I have a lot of examples of compassion, so let's start my story.

This is a true story that talks about my family and me showing compassion. First, let's talk about my mom. Once, when my mother was at a gas station, a lady came up to my mom's window and said, "Please help me, I have no more money and I can't walk home because it is a long way". "It's okay", my mom replied. Then my mom gave the lady some money. "Thank you," she said. Then she left. I was so proud of my mom that day.

My dad is also full of compassion. A lot of times he helps people hold stuff or if they need help reaching something, he will get it. My dad is a good example of how people should act when they show compassion.

Now let's talk about me and my sisters. Super Gabby! She is only 4 years old and she can show compassion too. Let's read about her story. Once, on a Sunday morning after church, a baby was crying. We couldn't hear anything, so what Gabby did was she went to her and gave her a drink. Everybody called her a super hero and so do I.

Finally, about me! I show compassion, too, and here is one true story about me. Once, in first grade during lunch, Farrah and I were eating a burger, but Farah needed help opening it so I helped her. I was getting a good grip till...flinnng! SSSSplattt! It landed right on the floor. Farrah was so sad when that happened and I was sad too, but then I realized I could share my burger with her. Farrah was really happy and so was I.

All of those true stories mean something. It shows how people look when they show compassion. Without compassion, everyone would be mean and laugh when people get hurt instead of help them. They might push and shove people and many more mean things. I hope people will use my story to show compassion and I also hope that your family will show it too!

Nora Charles  
First Place, Grade 3

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Do you know what compassion is? Compassion is when you show sympathy to someone, help people, or let them know you care about them. Some examples of this are helping someone pick up their books or put on their coat. You can help out in an organization. Also, you can donate money or old clothes to charity. Another example is helping out at school. You can let everyone play a game so no one feels left out.

In my life, my dad is compassionate. This is how my dad helps; he helps me when something is wrong by making me feel better or helping me work out my problem. He always lets my cousin sleep over at his house with me so I don't feel alone. Since he is a principal, he helps a lot of kids with their problems and their school work. Every time he notices a charity raising money, he always gives them whatever he can. Another thing that I like about him is that he always smiles at people. The biggest thing he does is help my grandma. My dad helped her move and he always goes to the store for her when she needs something. The last thing I can think of that he does is he always tries his best to help people.

Compassion is to be kind and supportive. It is being respectful and nice to others. Compassion is important to me because, if we didn't have compassion, the world would be a mess. There would be many arguments, and people would be rude to each other instead of being nice.

Nobody would want to communicate in a good way. This is why compassion is important.

Gabryele Carter  
Second Place, Grade 3

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What is compassion? Compassion is when somebody helps another. Whenever I see someone get hurt, feel sad, or need help, I help them. I learned that from my mom. I can't wait to tell you about my mom. She is so kind.

My mom shows compassion to my family by getting the clothes we need to survive. She gets us water, food, and shelter. Whenever I need help with my homework, she helps me. When I have volleyball practice or piano practice, she takes me and picks me up. That's how she shows compassion.

Whenever I need help, fall down, or feel sad, she cheers me up and puts medicine on where I hurt. She always makes sure we are feeling good even, when we are not feeling that great. Not only that, she makes sure that we have fun. Last, but not least, whenever we are on a vacation, she always gets us a souvenir so we can remember our vacation. That's how my mom shows compassion. She is awesome!

I told you before; compassion is when someone helps another person. In life, everyone has difficult times. People who are struggling will still have to struggle, and people will always need help. If the world was without compassion, the world would be bad. Those people who struggle would not receive help.

I told you all about how my mom is compassionate. Don't you agree? This is one of the people in my family who are compassionate. When you are feeling sad, someone will surely come and cheer you up. Always treat people the way you want to be treated. Be nice to people, even if you don't know them, and always be nice to your friends and family.

Elayna Tush  
Third Place, Grade 3

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Have you ever wondered what compassion was? Compassion is when you have a feeling of deep sympathy for someone in need of help. A world without compassion wouldn't be a nice place to live in. And there are lots of people around the world that help out their community. So here's a story about how me and my family show compassion for another family member.

I have a cousin named Christian. He needs a surgery called a transplant for an organ in his body, but it costs a lot of money to get one. So our family decided to have fundraisers to save money for his surgery. One fundraiser I was in was on a June summer day last year. We went to McDonalds in Newport, Delaware, and held a carwash in their parking lot. The whole family came—my mom, dad, sisters, other cousins, my aunt, my uncle, family friends, and even Christian was there. Some of the kids, including me, held up signs to get people's attention. Also, we had a box to hold all of the money. Everyone pitched in to help wash the cars. Some even got a little wet. We had a good time.

We are still having fundraisers for him. We are all hoping he eventually gets his transplant so he can be a healthy boy. This is my story on how my family and I show compassion.

Katrice Burnette  
First Place, Grade 4

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Have you ever done anything compassionate? And do you even know what compassion is? Compassion means a feeling of deep sympathy or sorrow for others. For instance, my mom and dad are very compassionate to other people. This is a story of how they were being very compassionate.

One day after church, we went to lunch at Jakes. (It's a very good place to eat.) After we ordered, my mom and dad thought, they are extremely jam-packed today! So my mom and dad went up to a woman that worked there and said, "We can help you make food and take the orders to the tables and other things." The woman said, "No thanks." But then my dad said, "I know how to flip burgers." And my mom said, "And I can take the orders to the tables." Then the woman said, "Okay, the reason that there are not many workers here is because they all called in sick I believe." I was sitting there thinking, WOW, my mom and dad are sooooo compassionate. When everything was done, the compassion did not stop there. My mom gave the woman our phone number and said, "Whenever you need us, call this number." The woman said, "Thank you so much!" Then we left after we ate our food and we got our food for free.

So you see how my mom and dad are very compassionate. You can be compassionate, too. All it takes is a little effort to do it. If my mom and dad can do it, you can too. Now go and be compassionate to others.

Grace Ezell  
Second Place, Grade 4

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Wow. Compassion is the best thing in the world! Well, do you want to hear a story? Ok. My dad saved a house from burning down. My dad is the best, don't you think?

Here's how it started. My dad forgot to take his medicine, so he came home from his pool game to take the medicine. Then, while he was on his way back to the pool game, he saw a light. When he got closer to the light, he saw that it was a fire. Once he got there, he opened his car door and started pounding on their door. The people who lived there opened the door. Next, they got a fire extinguisher, but that did not take it out all the way.

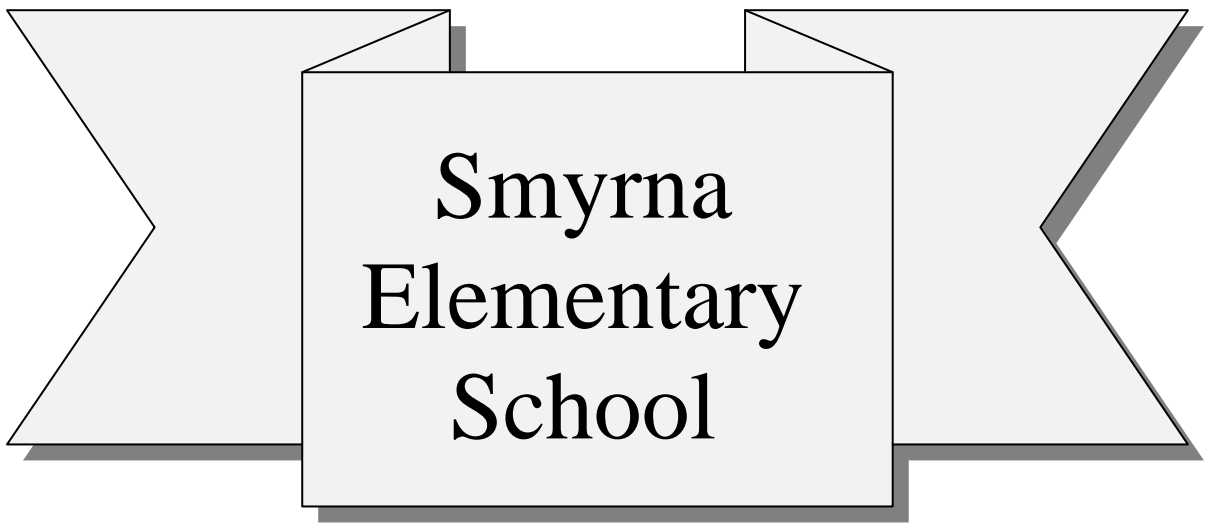
So they used a sprinkler that they had inside the house and put it out all the way. Then there was this rubber thing on the top of the ceiling that was starting to burn, so they called the firefighters. My mom, brothers, and I saw firefighters going across the street while we were at Wawa getting gas. A few minutes later, the firefighters showed up at the house. They made the rubber stop burning.

Next, my mom, brothers, and I came home and the firefighters were still there. My mom went out of the car and went to Hope. She said, "Mark started pounding on the door!" Then my mom came back to the car, opened the door, and we waited until they left to go home. A few weeks later, we got a tray of cookies.

This is how my dad saved a house from burning down. I know you can do it, because my dad did it. Well, that was my story. I hope one day you can show compassion. Compassion is the best, don't you think?

Shawn Mannerling  
Third Place, Grade 4

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*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

I helped my father feel better by creating a hot shot fire ball red car. It made my dad feel much better when he was sick.

Khang Nguyn  
First Place, Kindergarten

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I help Katelynn by giving my extra tickets to her. Breanna helps me stop crying.

Sherry Lin  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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My Dad is compassionate because when I was crying he hugs me.

Kharyzma Goldsborough  
Third Place, Kindergarten

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My friend is awesome! I fell off the monkey bars because I was hanging down on one foot and she said "Are you ok?" and then she told the teacher "Eleanor fell off the monkey bars." When I have no one to play with she comes to play with me. We play tag, hide-and-go-seek and baseball. It makes me feel wonderful. When I am feeling sick she comes over and keeps me company. When I have trouble with my homework she helps me. When I want to do puzzles with her she doesn't want to, but she will just do it to be compassionate. She is very compassionate. She is wonderful! She gives me soup when I am very very sick. I am very proud of her.

Eleanor Gummerson  
First Place, Grade 1

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What is compassion about? I love to help my friends and family. It is nice to help people and when I help people it feels good inside my body. I do not like seeing people hurt. I feel bad for people when they are sad. Do you like people sad?

Giada Tiberi  
Second Place, Grade 1

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Have you ever fell off of the playground and somebody helped you up? Once I fell off of the playground. I was hurt. My friend Jared helped me up. He walked me to the nurse. He waited

at the door until I was not hurt anymore. He made me feel much better. Has a person ever been compassionate to you?

Gabriel Prosser  
Third Place, Grade 1

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What is compassion you're asking? Well, compassion is having sympathy for others often including a desire to help. For example, someone might show compassion to a person who has gotten bad news and try to help them. This is what compassion looks like to me. Well, in my words, it is being a nice friend. Making sure he/she is ok. But if they are hurt, you can bring them to a grown up so they can help them out. But I will always help them first! Compassion doesn't always require an action because sometimes you can just say, "Oh, I am so sorry to hear that or I am sorry about that it was an accident! I will try not to do it again." Compassion is important because if we didn't have it everyone would be mean to each other. And we wouldn't have anyone to talk to because we don't like them. These are the people that have been compassionate to me. Allina, Katie, and Abby. Yes, they all have been kind to me. Here is a story of one of them being compassionate to me. One time when I fell down Katie picked me up and asked if I was ok. I said yes. If you're still asking what compassion is, it's about being kind to others. Are you compassionate like me? Well, I hope you are because that is the right thing to do. If you are compassionate, you are a good person!

Kaylee Casey  
First Place, Grade 2

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Compassion is having support for others in need. People who help or even greet show compassion. It can even be shown by saying good morning! Compassion looks like people helping others in need or with bad news. A world without compassion would look everyone being mean. Our world needs compassion because if they didn't people wouldn't be kind enough to do anything! Now let me tell you when I saw an act of compassion: When military people are gone, others make special dinners and help out while parts of families are gone. Now they could just have made those yummy dinners for themselves or only done their chores instead of helping out. Can you be like that? Because one person can make a big difference! Now you learned all about compassion. Can this piece help you be more compassionate?

Eddie Clements  
Second Place, Grade 2

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What is compassion? Compassion is having sympathy for others often including a desire to help. What does compassion look like? It is like if someone falls you could pick them up or if someone is new you could help them through the day of school. Also, it doesn't always have to be an action but it depends on the problem. Also, compassion is also very important to the world because it's a way to make friends or to put peace on earth. Also, here are some people who

show compassion: my mom, friends, and lots of family. I think I show compassion, and I don't pick friends who do not show compassion because it's good to show compassion! Also, have you shown compassion?

Gabriella Castro  
Third Place, Grade 2

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What is compassion? Compassion is when you help someone up. You have emotions and feelings for one of your friends who got hurt or in trouble. But what compassion is most of all is caring for others. Here is a moment when I showed compassion to one of my family members.

In the year 2011 my uncle died. Everybody in my family was sad and crying. He died on a Tuesday. We went to his funeral on Friday. Then my mom took me to my aunt's house to cheer her up. When we got there, I spent the night there for five days. In those five days I helped her out a lot. I helped her get to bed, do the laundry and wash the dishes. Today she still is a little sad but she still is happy that I helped her out. She will always remember my uncle.

Well that was a moment that I remembered where I showed compassion. Oh, and by the way if you see someone hurt or even crying then help them out and show compassion. So show compassion. I hoped you liked it.

Robert Mace  
First Place, Grade 3

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What would be the world without compassion? This story tell when Aidan plays with me when I am sad, broke my wrist, and when I had a concussion. If you want to be a compassionate person read this story.

Let's talk about when I am sad. So one day while I was playing baseball a kids says that I am a skinny bat because I couldn't hit a home run and I was skinny. So I quit the game and I cam crying off the field. Aidan came after me and because he knew I was sad but he never hit a home run ever!

I have a 12-year-old friend named Michael. He always wants to play football. I can't tackle him but he can tackle me, so he hurts me but Michael's little brother Gabe hurts him. But when Aidan is not playing and I get hurt I quit, I go home, and I call Aidan. He comes over and calms me down and we play something that won't hurt me.

Now let's chat about when I broke my wrist. I broke my wrist right before I went to get a game. So the next day I called Aidan to tell him the bad news. He rushed over to my house, right away. We played something that didn't include my wrist. Then, two other friends came over (including Aidan) to play soccer. I wasn't goalie of course, and I scored a lot of goals! A couple of days later I got my splint and my cast off! Aidan helped me there. I got to give it to him.



Let's talk about the luckiest time of my life...my concussion. It started off with me playing football with a 13 year old and Aidan's older brother. I got ran over. I went to school and told Aidan. At recess I had to walk. Aidan did everything with me. I got better. Aidan smiled.

So if you ever get sad, break your wrist, or get a concussion, try to get a friend like Aidan. Compassion is everything – remember that. Try to get a hero like Aidan.

Patrick Crutchfield  
Second Place, Grade 3

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Hi! I want to tell you about compassion. You have compassion when you feel sorry for someone. You show compassion when you help someone. I wrote all about it. I hope you like it!

My mommy shows compassion by being nice. She also shows compassion by helping my little sister when she falls. She also shows it by feeling sorry for people. Mommy showed compassion to me when my dog Jackson died. I got the phone call from Daddy. "Zoe" he said. "Jackson got very sick and he died." I cried and cried. Mommy tried to make me feel better. We laid in bed and snuggled. She knew I was going to miss him. I knew she liked him too and she felt sorry for me.

Now you know what my mommy did that was compassionate. You also know how my mom shows compassion. And finally you know how my mom showed compassion. Until next time!

Zoe Petrosky-Ballard  
Third Place, Grade 3

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I would like to tell you what I did to show compassion and what compassion is.

Compassion is doing something without being asked and being nice to each other.

Compassion looks like somebody being kind to others.

My mom and I did something that really stood out. My mom saw something on Facebook and wanted to show me. She saw that the new Sandy Hook Elementary school wanted to decorate their school with paper snowflakes. My mom said she thought it would be cool if the fourth grade would make snowflakes and I said that's cool. So me and my sister started it and the fourth grade finished it. When they sent, we were so excited.

Compassion doesn't always have to be with your words it can be without your actions. Compassion is a very important thing to have. If you don't have compassion it can affect your life and others too. A world without compassion is like a mom without a dad or a sister without a brother, you know.

Do you know who I think is compassionate? My mom, for giving us that amazing idea. I also think that the fourth grade is a hero to Sandy Hook Elementary School.

There are plenty of ways you can be compassionate so pick one and show it.

That is what I think compassion is and how I showed it. How will you show compassion? I just hope that Sandy Hook is happy and they like the snowflakes!

Taylor Steele  
First Place, Grade 4

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Hi! Do you know who is compassionate? My best friend Jenna is a lot. First I need to tell you what compassion is. Compassion is having sympathy for others, often including a desire to help. Are you compassionate?

Jenna is very nice. She helps me with my problems. She will be there for you. If you are being bullied, she will stand up for you. If you are hurt she will help you. She is always there for me, so she will be there for you. Jenna is ten, just like me. She has short brown hair and brown eyes. She always cheers me up.

One time I had someone who was being mean to me. She stood up for me. She told them to stop or she was going to tell a teacher. On the first day of school, she was the first one to talk to me. At open house she and I talked a little. She helped me make a lot of friends. Most of the time (more like all of the time) she is right there with me. She is the sister I never had.

Compassion looks very nice. It looks like someone helping someone else out. It is someone standing up for a person being bullied. It is cheering someone else up. It is most importantly standing up for someone and having their back, even through hard times.

From the writing, do you think that Jenna is compassionate? I do! Do you think that you are like Jenna, nice and kind. I hope you like this writing. Maybe you should try writing about who is compassionate to you. Have fun!!

Taylor Ewing  
Second Place, Grade 4

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Hello, my name is Caitlyn. I'm going to tell you a few things about compassion. What it is how you can give compassion to others?

To me compassion is a kind thing to do to others. For example, helping someone if they drop their books. It is not hard to give someone just a little compassion, a simple act of kindness. It could mean a lot to someone if you give them compassion, maybe even brighten their day!

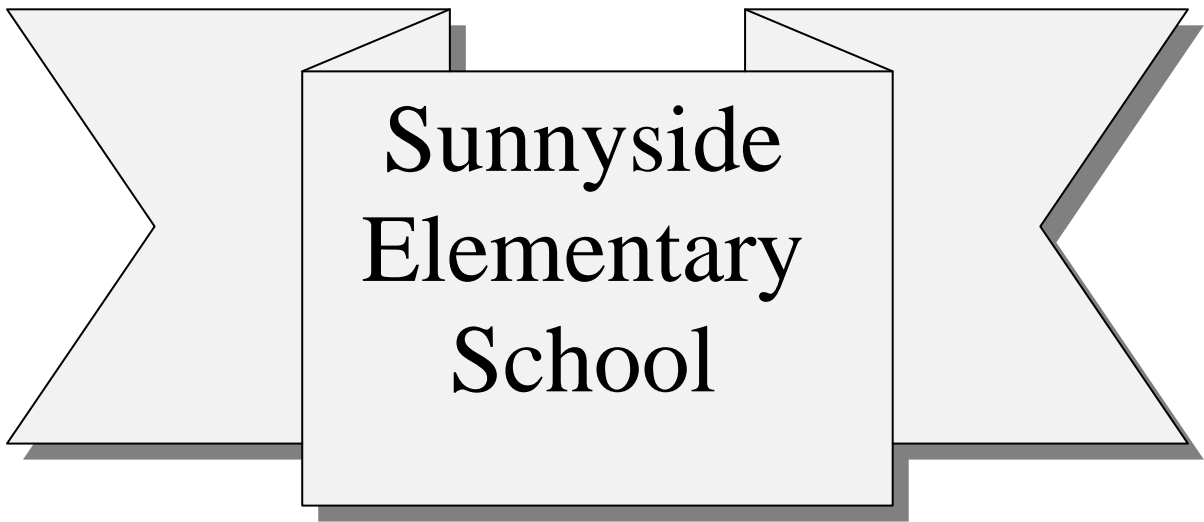
Think. If we did not have compassion in our lives, our lives would be full of desperation. There is always someone out there having a bad day. All you have to do is just maybe give someone a compliment and you could brighten their day.

Someone who is compassionate is my best friend Lilly. Whenever I am having a bad day, she will always be there for me. She makes me laugh when I am down. When I fall, she helps me up. She is an amazing friend; I know that I can definitely count on her.

So remember whenever you see someone down, always try to bring their frown upside down. You could warm someone's heart.

Caitlyn Thomas  
Third Place, Grade 4

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Sunnyside  
Elementary  
School

*Grades kindergarten, 1, 2, 3, and 4*

Compassion is being kind. I am kind to my friend. I give my friend a hug. I share my dolls.

Samiyah Lightfoot  
First Place, Kindergarten

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Compassion is important because if we did not show compassion nobody would be nice to each other. My mom shows compassion because she takes care of me.

Edric Poquita  
Second Place, Kindergarten

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Compassion is helping somebody up. One time I helped Robert up. He fell down. That was showing compassion.

Brock Rhoades  
Third Place, Kindergarten

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Do you know what compassion is? It's when someone includes others. I included others before. This is what happened. Me and my cousin, Danny, and my sister, Parker, were playing a girl game and we decided that Nathan could play so we played a boy game. Compassion is important to me because then we don't have bullies and bullies are not nice.

Ava Riley  
First Place, Grade 1

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Have you ever shown compassion? Compassion is helping people when they fall. Compassion is important because without it then people would get hurt. Mikey shows compassion by getting me band aids when I'm bleeding. He carries me inside. Compassion is very important.

Angelina Ayala  
Second Place, Grade 1

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Compassion means helping others. My friend Kane shows compassion. He shows compassion by picking me up when I fall off my scooter. I think people should show compassion because people should be treated nicely.

Michael Funk  
Third Place, Grade 1

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Would you like to know what compassion is? When you do something for others, care about someone, or if you cheer someone up. If you show compassion you will be happy. My act of compassion appeared on four legs. One cold evening there was a kitten. It was gray and white. It was out in the wind and it was freezing. We begged my mom to let the kitten in. While my mom was thinking about it my sister, brother and I began to offer to sleep outside. But my mom said we'll never survive. But we worked hard. We made it warm milk, fish and a bed. My mom agreed to allow the kitty cat to sleep in our garage. A day after that in the afternoon our babysitter's husband was there to see if the kitten was a boy or a girl. It was a girl. I was a little sad when we had to give up the kitten. But I knew we'd see it a lot more after we gave away the kitten. But Sox their cat didn't like her. I felt joyful when I showed compassion.

Amirah Torain  
First Place, Grade 2

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Have you ever helped a friend in need? If you have it is called compassion. Compassion is wanting to help others that need help like when they are hurt or sad. It really makes the world a better place! Compassion helps others have a good time too. It also makes life easier because you will always have someone to help you. You will be really happy when you see the smiles of the people and friends you help so showing compassion is the best. It is a gift to give or receive compassion it is better than the best birthday present! Compassion sometimes comes when you least expect it. Compassion is the best. Do you like compassion too? You might discover compassion is everywhere. Like when our class made snowflakes to decorate Sandy Hook Elementary. I felt good because I realized I was doing something good for all the kids in the school. I am sure all of them like that the school had decorations. I always try to help others by tying shoes and zipping coats on the playground. It is the best feeling ever. I really dislike getting bullied. Now I want to tell you about my dull and bad day. I was having a bad day because no one wanted to play with me on the playground. A girl came and said, "Do you want to play with me?" So she played with me. It was really fun and we even made a strong friendship. Her name is Madison. Once again I am going to tell you about compassion. Our family brings old toys and clothes to Goodwill. Then other people can use them to if they don't have as many things. Finally I am going to tell you what the school does to show compassion. We have a can donation for people who don't have as much delicious foods as us. My class donated 2 boxes. I love compassion! It feels awesome to receive compassion but a bit funny though when I receive compassion. I know I have friends then. When I give compassion, it feels even better because I know I just helped someone out and made a best friend. Try giving a little compassion and enjoy the feeling you get inside.

Grace Jansen  
Second Place, Grade 2

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Have you ever been hurt and needed a friend? You need a little compassion. Compassion is wanting to help other people. I think compassion is amazing to the world. I think it is very nice to show compassion to other people. When you give compassion, the other person smiles and their smile makes you smile. Everybody should show compassion because it's nice, helpful, and sweet. So are you going to show compassion? I showed compassion by helping tie shoes. I also helped a friend by taking them to the nurse. The next thing I did is I picked up trash at school in the cafeteria so everyone has a clean spot to eat. My friend Megan showed compassion to me when I slipped and I hurt my knee and Megan took me to the nurse. Now we're best friends forever. I'll never forget that day. Compassion feels good to just receive it because it fills my bucket. Compassion feels great because I'll never be down. When I give compassion, I filled their bucket and it feels awesome too. You know what it also feels like it feels awesome too. You know what it also feels like it feels like you just did it for not for tickets or stickers you did it because it feels good.

Kristin Keister  
Third Place, Grade 2

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Have you ever seen someone do something nice, caring, or helpful to cheer a person up? If so, then that person was showing compassion. Compassion means to show love and care to others if they deserve it or not. I'll now tell about a story that shows compassion. To begin with is the time when I was in second grade and I was going crazy with A's on the subjects. Things were okay until the spelling test came. On a usual day at school, I took a spelling test. When I brought the test to the house, my parents and I saw something so unusual that my parents were shocked and I was left speechless. I got an F. The shame made me so glum I almost cried. At the first moment dad saw how sad I was, he came to the rescue. At first I thought he was going to tell how disappointed he was but he came to comfort me. He told me, "I will help you study for the next test. I know that you can do great things." When he said that it cheered me up quick as a cheetah. After that, we studied hard core. On the next test I felt nervous at the beginning, but when the report came home I was happier than a rabbit in a pile of carrots, because I got an A, because of the compassion dad used to cheer me up. I got a perfect grade. I am proud of my dad for showing the best he cared about me. My dad is a hero of compassion, because he knew how his dad cared for him so he did the same thing for me. That's why my dad is the best.

Donovan Hopkins  
First Place, Grade 3

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Some acts of compassion take less than a minute but some take over a year! Wow! When someone says the magical word compassion, I remember the time a few years ago when my hair was long, knotty in the morning, always in my eyes, and the compassionate way I solved that problem. So get snuggled up in your seat because you're in for a treat.

One early spring day, when I was six and in the first grade my mom and I were having a conversation. "Mommy, it hurts when you brush my hair." "Sorry princess but if you want your hair to be long brushing has to hurt." My mom was telling the truth. My hair was as long as Mr.

Davis' whiteboard and as knotty as scribble skrabble that my brother did when he was two! My hair was so long you could do long division on it! My hair was so knotty when he was two my brother couldn't make a picture of it! There was another problem-my hair got in the way when I did everything, reading writing, even doing the dishes! That made me think something needed to be done...

Meanwhile, my mom kept calling my name. "Rebecca, Rebecca," she said. "Sorry" I said, "I was just thinking about how annoying my hair is getting to be." "Yeah about that," she said, "I just found out about Locks of Love." "What is that?" I ask curiously. She explained that it is a company that collects donated hair, cleans the hair to make sure there is not any bugs and that it is clean, and makes wigs for kids that doesn't have any hair. It took me less than a second to decide that I was going to donate my hair to Locks of Love.

The tables turned the day I finally got my haircut. I was excited and nervous as Harry Potter on his first day at Hogwarts Academy. First, my dad took me to the salon that my aunt Ceecee works at in North Wilmington. We had to wait five minutes until she was ready. Then she sat me in a seat, brushed my hair, and put my hair in ponytails. I didn't cry because number 1, I was in public, and number 2, my mom brushed it before we went. Snip! One ponytail gone. Snap! Another ponytail gone! "Finally," I thought, "my hair is out of my way. Even better, in about one week a girl with cancer or a hair loss disease will finally have hair."

During this event, I learned that one ponytail at a time will change the world. Now, what move will you make? Remember a world without compassion is like meatballs without the meat – just a ball.

Rebecca King  
Second Place, Grade 3

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People can show compassion in many different ways. Compassion is something that someone does and when they do it they have pride about it. When I hear the word compassion I think of what my family did to help my sister.

One day my pop pop and nonna were visiting from Florida. My sister was watching TV. All of a sudden my sister started shaking! I stayed with my pop pop. I was hugging him with all my might. My sister could not speak. My mom was holding on to my sister trying to get her to stop shaking. But she kept shaking. I started to hug my pop pop even harder. I accidentally hugged him a little too hard. All of a sudden I hear my nonna calling 911!

After you could hear the sirens roaring like a tiger. When the paramedics zoomed to our house with their lights flashing and their wheels spinning they rushed inside. The EMT checked my sister's eyes. My sister finally stopped shaking. My sister was so tired. I stopped hugging my pop pop. I asked my mom, "Is she okay?" My mom said, "Yes." I was hoping it would never happen again. My family went to the doctor the next day. The doctor gave my mom a prescription to get medicine for my sister. The doctor said to my family that my sister had epilepsy.



Finally, once the doctor told us my sister had epilepsy we asked the doctor a lot of questions. “Can we cure epilepsy?” “If so how can we cure epilepsy?” Then my family had an idea. We could raise money by doing an epilepsy walk. This walk is held once a year in Washington DC. I was six years old when I first did the walk. My family went to Washington DC the day before the epilepsy walk. That night we slept in a hotel. The next morning my family woke up and went to where the walk began. My family walked four miles and we raised a lot of money. No one has found a cure yet but my sister has grew out of epilepsy. Now my sister always has a smile on her face because she does not have epilepsy. That is how my family showed compassion.

Next time you see someone upset try to show compassion to them. Compassion can make everyone feel good. This is so because when you show compassion you know you did the right thing. Always show compassion.

Ryan Malone  
Third Place, Grade 3

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Have you ever searched gray skies for a patch of blue? In other words, have you made someone else’s day better by helping them or standing up for them? That’s one way you can be compassionate, but you don’t have to say something to be compassionate. You can also feel the *need* to help them, or maybe feel sorry for them. I remember a time when I showed compassion...

*Slam!* My brother Sean had entered the car. He seemed angry. “What’s wrong?” my mom asked. “I don’t want to talk about it!” he shouted, lifting his shirt over his head. I was hoping he’d be in a better mood; at least today. He gets bullied a lot; he has Autism and bucked teeth, and it wasn’t going to help that he was getting braces soon. We usually had fun together, but he just hadn’t been so “nice” lately. When we pulled up in our driveway, Sean was asleep. I grabbed my backpack and left the car. My mom opened his door. “Sean? Sean! Wake up.” He groaned, dragging his feet over to our front door. We headed inside, and immediately (like he had the past few days) Sean stomped up the stairs to bed. It was only 5:06, but he’d sleep for the rest of the day and for the whole night...and most of the time he *should* be getting ready for school. I zipped open my backpack and began on my ABC order spelling sheet, and then my math. Then I started typing on my computer. I felt so bad for him, I couldn’t concentrate on my story.

*A half-moon glistened on smooth granite boulders, turning them silver...* I kept reading the same sentence over and over in my book, *Warriors: Into the Wild*. I was only on the first page, listening to the soft voices of my mom and Sean talking in his room. I lay on my bed, trying to at least get the second sentence in, but it seemed impossible. “beaver...I hate them!” I heard Sean shout; I only heard half of what he said. Kids were calling him a beaver? It was even worse than I thought. It gave me an urge to write, I don’t know what, but it was gone in a second. Now I felt like sleeping, leaving this non-compassionate world and entering my dreams. I put my pillow over my head. Would anything ever be the same?

“Choice of Cold Sandwiches. Fruit Salads.” I was reading the lunch menu a few days after Sean came home saying kids were making fun of him. Things hadn’t changed. I heard kids say bad things in my school, too. The cafeteria was very loud, and the lines were crowded. There was pushing and shoving, and there was name calling. Two kids were in front of me, and after that, a kid who has bucked teeth, just like my brother. I heard “shut up”, and “buck teeth”, and I couldn’t just let that slip. “Stop it!” I said. “Stop making fun of him.” They stopped. I was so happy I could make them stop bullying.

I ran to my car at the end of the day. I told my mom all about what had happened in the cafeteria. “I’m very proud of you,” she had told me. It felt awesome. I thought it was just a little thing I said, but it obviously wasn’t. I never thought I’d say that, since I’m pretty shy. Be compassionate; you’ll be glad you did.

Erin Finney  
First Place, Grade 4

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Knock-knock...who’s there? Compassion...Compassion who? You should always be compassionate to everyone! Do you know what compassion means to me? To me compassion means being kind and showing respect to others. You should always show compassion to everyone.

Most teenagers spend their time going to the mall, going to parties, hanging out with their friends, playing video games, and getting on the computer. My big brother Andrew doesn’t do that...let me tell you how he spends his time. Last January of 2012, was *Relay for Life*. *Relay for Life* is for people that have or had cancer or people that have lost loved ones to cancer. You camp out in a tent overnight to show how much you care. You walk to earn money for cancer research.

Andres has done many things for charity but one thing is the Special Olympics. The Special Olympics are the Olympics for people with disabilities. He volunteered all day long. One time at Andrew’s soccer game...it was huge!!!!!! They were winning 4-2. There was a kid with a disability on the other team. Andrew gave that kid the ball and he dribbled down the field. My cousin Jacob was the goalie and he let that kid score. He ran with all of his heart and gave my brother a huge hug. It made that kid’s day. Andrew has been through many tough times in his life and he helped me with all the tough times I had this year. Just recently on January 28, 2013, my grandfather passed away. He was 78 years old and he was very sick. We were all very sad. I am still sad now. One night after my brother got home, I was bawling my eyes out. He gave me comfort and gave me a big hug. Also sometime in November 2012 my parents got divorced. It happened to Andre before too before I was born. He made me realize that it is ok to be sad and we always have a lot of fun. It is really fun living in two houses. Also, last summer my grandmother lost her leg. We didn’t think she would make it be we visited her every day. It is ok to feel sad. During those times Andrew comforted me.

Andrew has influenced me in many ways. He has outstanding grades, works hard at all of his sports, and is nice to everybody he meets too. He got two scholarships to two colleges. He got one to West Virginia Wesleyan for \$18,000 per year. He got the same amount to Susquehanna

in PA. Now I definitely want to achieve the goals he has. I know it is possible because he has those goals.

Andrew is a one of a kind person. I've never met anyone else like him. I'm proud to call him not only a brother but a best friend. How many people can say that about a sibling? I'm very lucky that Andrew is a part of my life.

Emily Thompson  
Second Place, Grade 4

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What is compassion? For me it is when you make someone else feel good. One person that shines above everyone else in my life is Sophia Demarco!

Now all of this happened on a hot summers' day on July 12, 2012. Let me introduce Sophia Demarco (aka Miss. Phia) she has medium dirty blonde hair, hazel eyes, and can be very dramatic. Someone else you might want to know about is Edward. He has brown hair, brown eyes, and is sometimes a brat. Our story begins in my room...

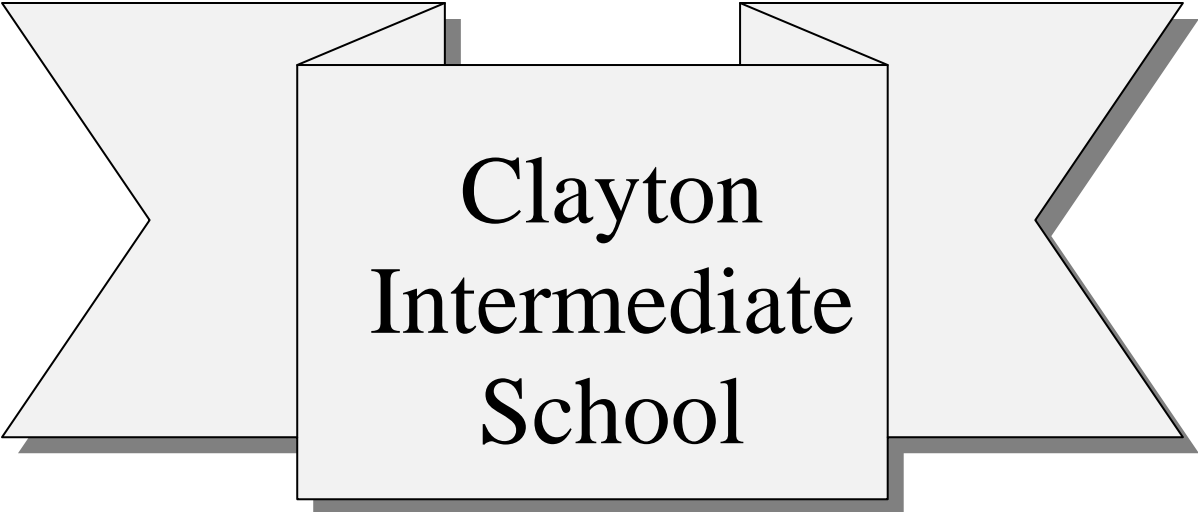
We were playing Crazy Duck, Fast Goose. Everything was fine until Edward wanted to play Star Wars. I said "Okay we'll play after we're done," and it's a very long game. We played a few more rounds and I was a crazy duck, hairy duck, and fast goose. Miss Phia was a very fast goose, Chinese duck, and chewy duck. Edward was a bald duck, a slow goose, and a pickle. He wasn't happy about being the pickle.

This is where he thought we crossed the line. He started hitting and kicking me. Just then I said "Note to you we're on the last round!" Now for some reason he backed up then started charging at me. Miss Phia must have wanted to help me because she came in at the last second and pulled me out, but also got pushed in the corner of my bed. Almost immediately a big bruise the size of a potato.

Sophia is the most compassionate person I know. She taught me that if someone is not confident, in trouble, or sad you should show compassion and help them. Hopefully, she taught him a lesson too. I learned a lesson too. Edward has been over to my house again, but I have not let him play crazy duck, fast goose ever again. I don't think I ever will if I care about my own safety.

Lauren Hudson  
Third Place, Grade 4

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Clayton  
Intermediate  
School

*Grades 5 and 6*

Compassion can be described in many ways. What you say compassion is will be different from someone around you. My definition of the word compassion is caring for others and trying your best to make them feel good. Thinking of compassion brings up many memories, but I have chosen one that I believe best fits compassion's definition. It was called Community Clean-Up Day.

About two years ago, my mother was attending a Homeowners Association meeting, when the topic came to Community Clean-Up Day. My mother volunteered to help. By the time the meeting was over, the association had a date and time. I asked my mom if I could help. She told me "If we are going to clean the whole neighborhood, we need all the help we can get." The next morning, I woke up, got dressed, and grabbed the supplies of trash bags and gloves. It was 8:30 when my family and I drove over to the front of the neighborhood, where we were supposed to meet. When we pulled up, there were only two members. We gave the two men trash bags and gloves. I ran to my friend's houses to see if they could help. Less than half of my friends came, and we set off around the neighborhood. As we drove around, picking up trash all along the way, I thought, "Why had no one else come?" I also thanked the compassionate men that showed. When we finished cleaning the neighborhood, it looked completely spotless. I felt amazing about what my friends and family had done.

Community Clean-Up Day taught me about many things. I learned to appreciate my home being so clean. It also taught me that being compassionate makes you feel positive inside. This event was so special to me because one of my goals in life is to make the world a better place. This not only helped the people of my community, but it also helped the animals including rabbits, fish, and insects. By participating in Community Clean-Up Day, I found that making a difference in my neighborhood, made a difference in me and my friends too.

What would have happened if my family and friends hadn't come together to participate in this fantastic event? Just thinking of the scene gives me goose bumps. Trash, tons of it, scattered around the neighborhood. Glass shards in the middle of the road, just waiting to pop a tire. An awful and unsafe landfill. I'm sure you can agree that just this one figment of imagination is disgusting.

Compassion. An act of kindness that shows care for another. This core value brings up the wonderful act of Community Clean-Up Day. I learned that compassion is more about making others feel good, and not just yourself. If this compassionate event hadn't happened, my neighbors might as well have been living in a landfill. When all is said and done, I believe that a virtue such as compassion, no matter who you are, can be counted as one of your best.

Delaney Meginniss  
First Place, Grade 5

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Do you know what compassion is? Well compassion is when someone needs help and another person is there to help them out. It is also when someone is caring for other people. On September 15, 2012, I did a Walk-A-Thon for my Aunt Pam and the team name was called "DeeFEETing ALS for Pam." So, I decided to write about the team because I think they showed compassion and here is why.

I think the team showed perseverance because there was over 80 walkers on the team, and one by one more and more people joined because they heard about my Aunt Pam's illness. Also, we never gave up on the donations, we kept asking tons of people to help and by the end of the Walk-A-Thon, and we raised over \$32,000. Another way the team showed perseverance was when we walked. Some people walked the whole Rehoboth boardwalk twice, some even three times. We wanted to walk the extra mile for my Aunt Pam.

I also think the team is caring because some of the walkers went to visit my Aunt Pam every day. In order to participate in the Walk-A-Thon, some people flew in from Texas and Arizona just to walk for my Aunt Pam. Also, some of the people that donated did not even know my Aunt Pam, and that shows just how much compassion people have for my aunt.

Last but not least, I think the team is helpful. They are helpful because by raising all that money, they will help find a cure for my Aunt Pam. They are also helping her get better because some of the money may go to her medicine that she takes, so the team is very helpful.

From this piece I want people to learn how compassion is helping my Aunt Pam get better, and how compassion can help the world be better. Compassion is an awesome trait to have, and I am glad the Walk-A-Thon team "DeeFeeting ALS for Pam" has compassion.

Kayla Wilson  
Second Place, Grade 5

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Do you know what my meaning of compassion is? Compassion is when a person or a group of people are in need, and a person volunteers to help them. That reminds me of my mom. I can think of three reasons why the definition reminds me of my mom. First my mom donates stuff to the hurricane Sandy victims. Secondly, my mom works at a daycare for kids with not so much money. Third, my mom volunteers almost every other weekend to help the Sandy victims.

First let's talk about donating to the Sandy victims. My mom helps out by putting about posters at her work (the daycare) of how people should donate food and things. My family and I went through most of our stuff, looking for things that would help them. We donated stuff like toys, coats, pillows, blankets, etc. My mom loves to volunteer in NJ, because if we still lived there and we were in a shelter home people would probably want to help us too.

Second, let's talk about the daycare. My mom works at a daycare for people who can't afford more expensive schools/day cares. There are some kids there that need special help. My mom runs a dance class there for forty-five minutes every Tuesday and Thursday. That helps them to cooperate with other kids. All of the other workers there have a least two jobs. My mom is a big help there.

Third, let's talk about how my mom volunteers at the shelter homes. When we take trips to NJ my mom usually goes to the shelter homes. She would take at least a day to go there and volunteer. When she works there she sees what she should bring most of. Then when we get back she tells her friends that they need a lot of baby food (example). When we are in NJ, she calls her friends and plan a day to go to the shelter homes.

Now do you know why my meaning reminds me of my mom? It does because if someone needs help she will want to help them. There are a lot of other helpful things my mom does and one of them is: When she found out her friend had breast cancer she did a bunch of runs for cancer and helped her a lot. That's why I picked my mom for the compassion writing essay.

Coral Dillon  
Third Place – Grade 5

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In my school we always do our best to help others in need. As a part of student council, we do more than the rest of the school and run fundraisers for not just our school but for the community and people who need help. We bring it upon ourselves to make a difference in others lives like providing food with the can food drive that we have had two of this year, and selling bracelets for breast cancer. In February we will hold Pennies for Pasta for the Leukemia Foundation and the winning class will win a Olive Garden lunch. Also, in student council we encourage our peers to have compassion because a world without compassion is a world full of hate and anger. Compassion is truly having sympathy for others and when we turn out two thousand cans for our fundraising, we feel we definitely have accomplished something as a school. Recently we held a can food drive to provide food to people who don't have any and it made me happy to see all those cans going to all those people.

The first thing we did to kick off our can food was hold a spirit week where we gave prizes to students for bringing in cans. It was not a full week so it started with a reward of two tickets per can, then the prizes were more extravagant like candy for two cans and wearing hats for three. Finally on Friday we got permission from the principal to host a iPod day where we could listen to our pods at lunch for only four cans. During the last week or two we held another spirit week where we did the same prizes on a full week, so we had a opportunity to add another prize so at the end of the week, we gave out hot cocoa to people for five cans each and it turns out that we pulled just about two thousand cans. To see all those in boxes felt pretty good, but it was nothing compared to what happened next.

On the week after the food drive closed the Smyrna-Clayton Sun Times came to our school to take a picture of all the cans. Instead of having her take a picture of cans in a box we decided to do something creative. What we did was spell out CIS CARES with cans! It took a long time and hard work, but we didn't complain because we knew we accomplished something great. We felt that too but as a team we made it all happen, and it was an amazing feeling knowing that we as a school did that.

After that I went home tired and exhausted, but I felt great because I had done something good for the community. Tired and hungry, I thought about what we did collecting all those cans for people to eat that have no food. I thought that all those cans that we collected at school could make a difference in somebody's life, and I knew I had been a part of it. I can honestly say that was one of the best feelings I have ever felt in my life.

Our school always helps others in need. We held spirit week to encourage students to bring in cans, and made the front cover of the newspaper by spelling CIS CARES, and just the thought of

that makes me feel good inside. It's because of this that our school is the best and we encourage all others to be the same.

Jillian Hughes  
First Place – Grade 6

Do you know the true meaning of compassion? Also, do you know someone who is an example of compassion? In fact, I have so many compassionate people in my life, I couldn't pick just one. So I picked the two most compassionate people in my life. My mom, Rosemarie, and my dad, Michael, are the two most important to me. My mom is a teacher at Smyrna High School. She inspires people to learn and she helps 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders to have a happy and successful future. Even then, there is much more to her job. My dad is also a teacher, but there is a slight difference. He teaches at night time. Then, there is his "real" job that he works so hard at, that it makes me think of a lion tamer trying to tame a lion. The lion tamer works so hard, and takes so much out of his personal time, that at the end, he tames the lion. He works days and nights to make Middletown safe as a police officer. Together, they are the perfect parents. My mom, Rosemarie, and my dad, Michael, are my compassionate heroes. They show compassion not just at their jobs, but at home, and treat me like they need me more than I need them.

If you haven't guessed yet, my mom, Rosemarie, is an English teacher. My mom is the kind of person when you are in the same room as her; you feel how happy she is, and how warm, kind, and compassionate she is. One way she shows compassion is through her job and how she does her job. In addition to teaching at the high school, she taught homebound students. She felt sympathy and care for them, so she helped them. When they returned to school, they weren't lost or confused. She also helps students at the high school's Writing Center by perfecting their writing skills or catching up on work they need to make-up in their English class. There are many times my mom is asked to write a letter of recommendation for her students so that they can get into the college of their choice. All of these things combined take a good amount of her personal time, but she doesn't mind, that's where her compassion comes in.

As a mom, I think most of her money goes toward gas for her car. You might ask why I said that. My soccer team travels to many different places to play games and tournaments. She drives me to every single one of those games. On the way to my games, or even on the way to school, she shows compassion when I'm blurting out the lyrics to my favorite songs. You don't know how much I appreciate her. She is my hero.

My dad is not just a police officer; there are many different roles he plays throughout his workday. He demonstrates compassion through each and every one of his jobs. You would think that police officers just catch bad guys who commit crimes, but that is not true. The Middletown Police Department had a fundraiser that started in late November and ran until early December and my dad donated \$300. In late September 2011, my dad attended a funeral for his partner. When I was a baby, my dad worked for the New Castle County Police Department. He was a detective who investigated crimes where people had been victimized. He had an old partner there. I could tell the day he found out that his old partner had passed away, he was devastated. He was surrounded in a cloud of gloom. He loves his job and the people he works for and with so much that he teaches others how to become police officers at Delaware Technical Community College.



He is a fatherly figure to everyone, not just me. Sometimes parents and kids go to the Middletown Police Department to talk to one of the officers if their child is not on the right track for a good life. As a dad, he nurtures me, cares for me, laughs with me, and loves me. It's funny, whenever he picks me up at my mom's house; I talk to him so much anxious to fill him in on what has happened since last I saw him. He is truly a hero. My hero.

The biggest way my parents show compassion is through how they are parenting me. They support me at the same time by helping me with soccer at MOT. They both financially contribute so that I can continue playing travel soccer. They pay for it because they know how much I LOVE soccer. When I don't feel well they are always there caring for me and making me feel better. My mom will always be next to me, right at my side. I remember one time when I was scared and sick; she slept on my bedroom floor. I can't go to my dad's house when I'm sick because I have a baby brother and sister, but he makes sure to call me and lets me talk to everyone. Sometimes my mom would even drive me to see him in the car and meet him in the driveway.

With all of these things said, you can surely see that they give me everything they possibly can as parents. They treat me like I am special and different from everyone in the world. Most of all, and most importantly, they truly love me. Reader, I hope you understand what compassion is and if you do not yet, I will give you the definition from the dictionary; "a feeling of sympathy for and a desire to help someone who is suffering." Do you remember when I asked you if you knew someone who is an example of compassion? I hope you realized that you have a lot of people in your life that show compassion. I also hope you realize that I have two amazing people who demonstrate compassion perfectly.

Lauren Iglia  
Second Place, Grade 6

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Do you know why compassion is important in society? It is important because it reassures us there are still people willing to help. For example, the Red Cross Association plays a big role in compassion, and by doing this, many people have been affected by their support. I am glad to have volunteers in the Red Cross because they provide for people in need, work because they care, and show us the true meaning of compassion by having sympathy for others without thinking of themselves.

The Red Cross has a long history. In 1859, a man named Henry Dunant saw many men wounded on a battlefield. He knew this wasn't right, and he wanted to help them, so he did. Henry organized a program called The Red Cross Association. Today the Red Cross provides disaster relief. No matter where you are or what you need, the Red Cross provides you with shelter, food, water, and the comfort of knowing you are not alone when you need help the most. Most of the members that make up the Red Cross are simply volunteers! As you can see, they're just regular people who want to help people all over the world without getting recognition or money. If that doesn't show compassion, I don't know what does!

Meanwhile...the lives of people in Haiti were about to take a turn for the worst. A disaster earthquake was building and building. Then, on the day of January 12, 2010, it was time. With

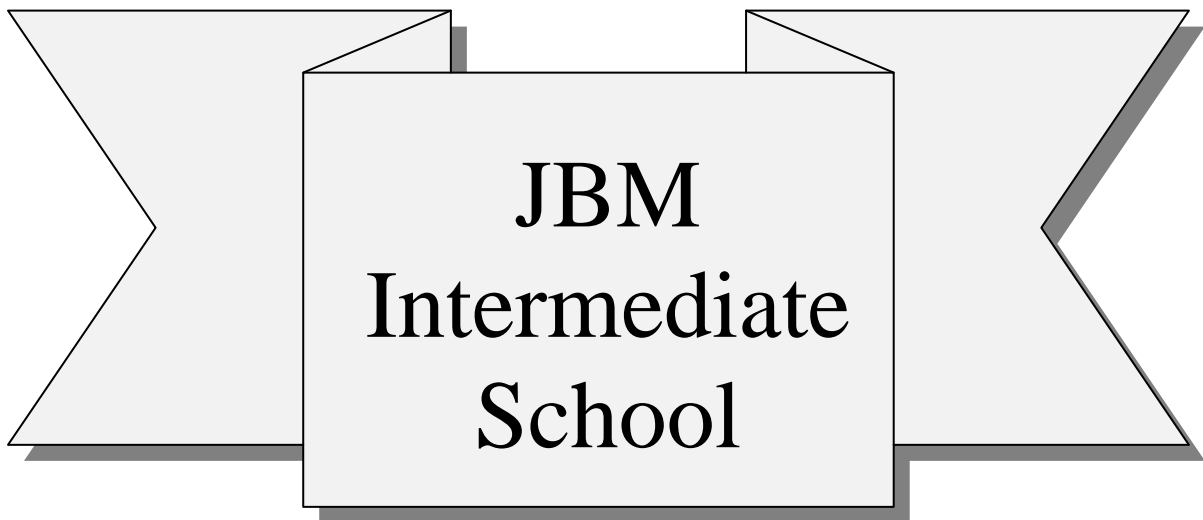
a whopping magnitude of 7.3, the earthquake hit, changing everyone's lives forever. Word got back saying that about 316,000 were dead, about 3,000,000 were injured, and over 1,000,000 homeless. Once I heard this news, I remember being sad, shocked, and too afraid to put myself in such a situation. I knew this event was so catastrophic, it could never be forgotten, or completely healed. These people needed food, water, medical treatment, and most of all, a shoulder to cry on.

Immediately, the Red Cross put it in high gear, sending people out of Haiti with water bottles, bandages, and much more supplies in attempt to glue Haiti back together. They sent out alert messages that spread everywhere. Whether it was the bottom of your TV screen, the front page on your computer, or even a local newspaper. I am glad this situation was treated with so much attention because I felt this wasn't an ordinary situation. It was a problem that had to be treated with every single ounce of determination and power in everyone's bodies. Other people were able to help by sending in donations. Whether it was 5 dollars or 5,000 dollars, every penny made a difference. They built homes too. They helped about 400,000 people get into homes. Then, they provided communities with clean water and sanitation systems. Finally, they worked with local communities to make it safer and healthier all around.

Without a doubt, the Red Cross devotes every second of the day to helping others. They work hard and love what they do. I am thankful for anyone who has shown me the true meaning of compassion by doing something for someone else. Whenever I am in need of desperate help, I'll know who to turn to.

Morgan Holman  
Third Place, Grade 6

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*Grades 5 and 6*

Would you save someone during an earthquake? When disaster erupts, people all over will try to do whatever they can to assist them. In 2010, devastation struck Haiti when a disastrous earthquake pummeled the island. People in Haiti needed help immediately because they had no food, water, or homes. My doctor helped the people in Haiti by donating medicine, food, and water. She did this because compassion for others is a core value that makes our community a better place to live.

Doctor Liquido is a compassionate person. Jennifer Liquido lives in Smyrna, Delaware, and she is a pediatrician. Doctor Liquido enjoys working with kids and her staff. I know her very well because she is my local doctor. She tries to keep her patients healthy every single day.

It was an ordinary day until a massive earthquake shook the country of Haiti. Thousands of people lost their lives, homes, and loved ones. When the disaster was over, people were devastated. Citizens were trapped in rubble and drastically needed help. Doctor Liquido was stunned when she heard about the suffering of the Haitians.

Jennifer Liquido wanted to assist those in need, so she developed an idea. Her idea was to travel to Haiti so that she could personally help out. Doctor Liquido traveled to Haiti with medicine, clothes, food, and water. While she was there, she helped the injured. If Doctor Liquido had not visited Haiti many people would have been homeless or might have died. The people of Haiti were overjoyed that generous people like Dr. Liquido took their time to help. Since the people were so grateful, Jennifer Liquido was glad that she made helping Haiti her mission.

Doctor Liquido shows compassion wherever she is. The world is a better place because of the generosity of compassionate people. If we did not have compassionate people, the world would be a Hot Mess!! All around you there are always compassionate people wherever you go! If you ever see someone in need of assistance, lend them a hand! You will make our community and our world a better place to live!

Amy Ndiaye  
First Place, Grade 5

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Would you stand up for someone to change everything? People should really stand up, you might be surprised at the change. Martin Luther King, Jr. really wanted equal rights for both African Americans and Caucasians. He really wanted to help African Americans because they were made slaves earlier in our history. This was a very dangerous time so it took a lot of courage to stand up in front of thousands of people to explain why everyone should have equal rights. Martin Luther King, Jr. helped African Americans by standing up for them. He did this because compassion for others is a core value that makes our community better.

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a compassionate person. Many people were proud of him. Many people knew him as a father, husband, son, and a brother, but I knew him as a hero! Martin was kind, but a very hard working guy too. He always lit a smile on someone's face when he spoke. Martin was an extremely compassionate and determined man.

Back then, African Americans did not have the same rights as white people, such as going to the same school and drinking out of the same water fountain. People even went to jail for trying to do things only others could do. When this was going on, Martin Luther King, Jr. wanted to take a stand for justice. Martin stood up for mistreated African Americans during that time. People started to think of him as the “voice” for African Americans. They started to actually listen to Martin for a change and question racism.

The motivation that started Martin Luther King, Jr. was the threats and hatred toward African Americans. What gave Martin the courage to stand up in front of thousands of people was his supportive relatives and friends. Some white people were disgusted by him because at this time they felt superior to African Americans. When Martin told people about his dream, he was actually taken seriously and his hard work paid off. He eventually won the Noel Peace Prize. People should be thankful that others are brave enough to stand up for change.

Martin Luther King, Jr. united us all and helped put an end to racism. Martin not only helped African Americans, he helped us all look into the direction of looking beyond someone’s skin color. Martin showed compassion, just like we all should. If you would take a moment of your time to imagine what the world would be like without compassion, it wouldn’t be such a great place would it? Just like Martin Luther King, Jr., we should all try to be compassionate and strive to change the world for freedom and equality.

Gary Walls  
Second Place, Grade 5

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What is compassion? Compassion is having sympathy for others and doing nice things for people. I know of two girls that would be a great example of compassion. In the article, it said that Brittany Ritter and Karrsin Mitchell helped the community by placing hand-made wreaths on peoples’ graves, because compassion for others is a core value that makes our community a better place to live.

Brittany and Karrsin are compassionate people. I first became familiar with them from reading a newspaper article in the News Journal. Along with that, I found a few facts about them. To start off, the girls are 13, another fact is that both of them are from Millsboro, they also really enjoy helping people, and they even spent time after school or on the weekends to help. Both Brittany and Karrsin’s mercy and talent certainly knows no bounds!

The community needed someone to step in and give them a helping hand. They needed money to decorate the graves from Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Most people couldn’t do that, because they couldn’t afford to buy decorations, since Christmas was on its way. Luckily, Brittany and Karrsin helped the neighborhood and the people at the right time.

Because of Brittany and Karrsin, the community’s life changed forever. The girls placed hand-made wreaths on peoples’ graves. If the community wasn’t helped, then everyone would have been gloomy when they saw the graves, because they would have been undecorated. Now, since the girls helped, when people pass the graves, it puts a smile on their faces because the graves are so pretty. So you can see, Brittany and Karrsin made a big impact on the cemetery’s life.

In conclusion, being compassionate makes the world a better place! Keep in mind that these two young girls are very good examples of compassion. So just remember: being compassionate is super easy and fun! Maybe you should go out and do good acts for people. I know you can do it!

Tahlia Pepper  
Third Place, Grade 5

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Have you ever let one of your friends borrow some money, or you give them some food because they don't have enough to eat? These acts of kindness would show that you are a very compassionate person. Compassion is giving something to someone without asking for or requiring anything in return. Just like the quote "Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Humankind couldn't survive without them!" from Dalai Lama XIV. This quote means that the human race wouldn't live a good life and everyone would hate each other, then we would start big wars! Sandy and the floods she created affected many people; Red Cross helped them and gave them many necessities. Red Cross helped them because compassion is a core value that makes our country a better place to be.

Red Cross is a very compassionate organization, which helps people recover from natural disasters, such as tsunamis, snowstorms, tornados, earthquakes, flooding and hurricanes. They provide food, water, money, and shelter to those who need it. The Red Cross is made up of many volunteers that help rebuild and support the people who have lost their homes and so much more. I know about this amazingly compassionate organization because I have seen them in articles and on T.V.

The Hurricane Sandy survivors needed help. They were running out of food and water. The survivors' homes were either demolished or flooded so nothing was useable. I know about these survivors because of the news channel. They were showing all the damage Hurricane Sandy was doing. They showed all of the floods and destruction they also showed a story of a man who tried to escape his flooded home and get to his car. These citizens of New Jersey, Virginia, and New York were desperate for help.

The compassionate helped with the need by giving the hurricane survivors the necessities of life. They provided them with food, water, shelter, and money. The Red Cross not only provided them with food, water, money and shelter; they provided them with a shoulder to cry on and a construction crew made up of volunteers. This act of compassion greatly affected the lives of many citizens. If these survivors had not been helped, they would of died, or they wouldn't have what they do today. Hurricane Sandy was an immensely powerful hurricane that left a lot of destruction, homeless, and helpless people in its wake. Many people were injured, but they all survived because of the Red Cross.

Compassion makes this world an amazing place, because when people are happier and everyone doesn't hate each other it makes the world a more enjoyable place to be. Just like the Dalai Lama XIV said without compassion and love this world and the people in it cannot survive. When people have compassion, they help other people for nothing in return. They do it just

because once the job gets done they get their reward, seeing the person their helping become happier. That's why compassion is vital to humanity.

Raina Semenick  
First Place, Grade 6

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Do you know the meaning of the word compassion? Compassion is to show or to have sympathy for someone or something. Compassion can be shown every day and in many different ways. It can be shown from the smallest ways, like if you see someone struggling with carrying a lot of books, you could offer to help carry the books. The people I think of showing the most compassion on a daily basis are the first responders.

First responders are fire fighters, police officers, and paramedics. They are always the ones to take the first action which is how they got their name. It doesn't matter if it is a fire or an earthquake; they are the first to arrive. Here is a true story of a time I saw first responders in action. One day my family and I were on our way to Ohio for a family vacation and there was a huge car accident. One car was on fire and the other vehicle was totaled. Police officers were trying to figure out what happened. The fire fighters were busy putting out the inferno and the paramedics were racing towards the hospital with an injured driver.

The next story I'm going to tell you is true and in my opinion the greatest act of compassion I have ever heard of. This is the story of 9/11 and of all the first responders that died trying to save thousands of people. 9/11 was the day the World Trade Center collapsed because of a horrible act of terrorism. Two planes flew into the towers causing them to collapse. It was 8:45 when the north face tower was hit! By 8:50 the first responders were on the scene. They guided everyone around the tower in a safe distance and helped anyone who was injured. If needed, they would drive someone to the nearest hospital. As person after person came running and screaming out of the tower, many more ran in. Every person that ran into the tower had one objective, to help someone else get out. Then at 9:03 the south face tower fell! By then even more first responders were on the scene, ready to help. Today we show thanks to the people who gave their lives while trying to save someone else get out of one of those towers. That is how first responders show compassion. They care so much for other people that they will risk their own life to save another, as they did on 9/11. That's why first responders are good at what they do; their priority is to help others.

I hope that this will give you a better understanding of what compassion is. Just remember that compassion can be shown in our everyday lives. You could help a neighbor that's sick by taking them to a doctor's appointment or you can volunteer at a local homeless shelter. Most of all, always remember those brave and compassionate people that lost their lives on the day 9/11.

Logan McKinney  
Second Place, Grade 6

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What compassion means to me is to help others out when they need it most. Not just by looking, by doing. When you see compassion or act compassionate you always feel warmth in your heart. Mr. Wallace has all of these qualities in him, plus he provides for his family at home. Mr. Wallace is a big role model for what we should all live up to. He is joyful, proud to be at school, and he puts us in front of himself.

Mr. Wallace is very compassionate about keeping students out of harm. He also stops kids from getting in harm's way. So in my opinion he is our own personal bodyguard when we are at school or sees us in harm's way. Mr. Wallace does not have favorites in any of his classes. He shares his trust with us and teaches us good habits. He makes people smile everywhere he goes.

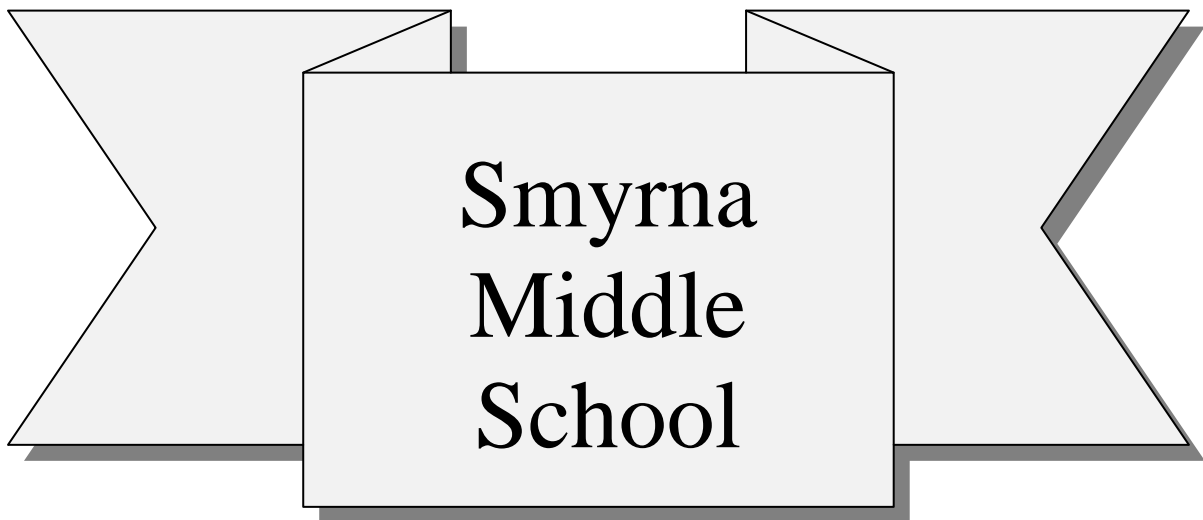
Mr. Wallace has done a lot of others meaning if you are having a bad day, he will try to make you feel better or feel safe. He will let you do your work in the hallway so no one bothers you. If you can't figure out what to do, he will give you the best advice he can. For example, if you are stuck on a question he will help you through the problem.

In conclusion, Mr. Wallace is more than compassionate; he is like a second father to all of us. He takes care of us, treats us well, and won't let anything happen to us. He will never let us down and we can always count on him for advice. So from my point of view, Mr. Wallace is the definition of compassion.

Tim Czajkowski  
Third Place, Grade 6

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*Grades 7 and 8*

Sometimes I wonder what others think compassion actually is. I think most people think it's holding a door for someone or picking up a pencil someone dropped. That's kindness, not compassion. Compassion is helping those who are unfortunate or suffering. When you give to or help someone who is in desperate need you are showing compassion. Can compassion change the world? To me it can change the world through people donating to those who are suffering, having charities, and helping the unfortunate.

Have you ever heard of the story "Angela's Ashes"? It's about a boy named Frank who is in a fever hospital because he got a sickness called typhoid. This story showed a lot of compassion. In the story, soldiers donated blood to Frank to help him survive through typhoid. "I have stitches on the back of my right hand and my two feet where they put in the soldier's blood." This story caused change because the soldier's blood made Frank survive through typhoid, and Frank then wrote his autobiography including this story when he was an adult.

Vinciance Rycroft was a speaker at the "Science of Compassion" conference. She said the point of the conference that she organized was to look at "the different approaches to compassion." Rycroft runs a charity called "Mind of Heart" which aims to give young people social and emotional skills to build a more sustainable society. This proves compassion can change the world by making a charity that can help young people who are having trouble with social and emotional skills.

Everyone you know in your life has faced a rough time in their life, including you. I witnessed compassion through a hard time in my life. When I was nine years old my mother flew to Australia to get a job and take the rest of the family with her. My father quit his work and we moved out of our house because we were supposed to move into a new country with my mother. A few weeks later everything changed. My mom was gone for good is what I used to think but she simply left us. I was heartbroken, my whole family was heartbroken. We had nothing left, no house, no money, but we had one thing. My very caring Aunt. She saw us suffering, not in good shape, and in a very difficult situation. My Aunt let us stay with her to help in our time of desperate need. My Aunt doing this helped my dad get a new job and that new job gave us a home. Compassion can go a long way, and definitely changed our world, through our aunt's actions.

"Compassion, Compassion  
Is it Something?  
The unfortunate need,  
And plead,  
And beg,  
And suffer,  
Some of us have the key  
The Key?  
The key to unlock a better future.  
Compassion, Compassion  
Is it something.

This poem is something I wrote because I really believe compassion can change the world. People who make charities to help those in need shows compassion. Those donating to the sick to save lives shows compassion and helping those who are facing a tough time shows compassion. Do you believe compassion can change the world?

Kassey Euren  
First Place, Grade 7

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Mother Teresa is a person that is now deceased, but she founded a charity for missionaries, and she helped children. Mother Teresa said, "I would rather make mistakes in kindness and compassion than work miracles in unkindness and hardness." There are also many stories about compassion. They show how it can change the world. An example would be the article "The Science of Compassion." A story that shows compassion would be "Angela's Ashes." Both of these texts give examples and show acts about compassion. These two texts can help you see great illustrations that show compassion. Compassion is a powerful feeling and can change the world.

In the story "Angela's Ashes" there was a really good act of compassion shown by one of the characters. The character's name was Seamus and he helped out Patrica and Frank. Seamus helped them out by passing the two kids the book knowing that he wasn't supposed to. The kids weren't supposed to be communicating because they both have deadly diseases, and the nuns were so strict that they didn't want the kids talking. Seamus says, "I'm not supposed to be bringing anything from a diphtheria room to a typhoid room...and I'll lose my good job and be out on the street." So Seamus passed the book anyway because he didn't believe the nuns and wanted to be a nice person. Seamus also risked his job because he knew what he did was wrong according to the nuns, but out of the kindness of his heart he did it anyway because he was compassionate.

In the article "The Science of Compassion" there was a speaker named Ogla Klimecki. In her speech, she mentioned the studies she did about compassion. "Your brain scans bits of red and blue, was very different in a compassionate state rather than in a non compassionate state." said Klimecki. That statement shows that compassion differs in different areas around the world. It's like when you come from a different state you might be meaner than another person from a different state, but that is just the way they are.

A year ago, in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, I showed an act of kindness when I helped this girl pick up her books when another student knocked them down. She fell and everyone just stared at her, so I went and helped her up, and then picked up her books. This was an act of compassion because I could have left her there and laughed like everyone else, but instead I took out the time to go and help her up and pick up her books. If I would have not done that she would have been embarrassed, and she would feel out of place. When I did that she actually gained more friends, and I gained a new friend too. So basically if everyone would do something similar it could change the world. So that just proves compassion can change the world.

So can compassion change our world? Yes I know so, because just by doing one act of compassion you can change someone's life and the world. The world would be nicer than ever and everyone will be happy and there would be no violence. We just need our people to change the world, and they can change the world with compassion. We just need a little loving!

Jade Edwards  
Second Place, Grade 7

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There are many people and organizations that are very compassionate all day, every day. But to me, The Relay for Life organization is the most compassionate of all. Relay events happen in over 5,000 communities across the United States and continue to grow. In fact, on May 17, Smyrna is having their Relay for Life at Smyrna High! So the reason why the Relay for Life organization is the most compassionate is by giving hope to those with cancer, honoring the ones who have died and lived, and by raising money for those with cancer.

Where there is hope, there is a cure! By raising money, people with cancer have hope that they will have a better tomorrow. Also when cancer patients are with others that also have cancer, it allows them to think they are not alone, which they are not. When you show someone that you are there for them, it gives them that little spark of hope that everything will be alright. No one should be going through this horrible situation alone.

The best part of Relay is when we all take a few minutes to honor the ones who have died and who are still fighting cancer. Luminary is one way that we show respect. We go around lighting all these candles in bags that all represent a loved one who has died of cancer or is still fighting it. As this is happening, the bags that spell out hope will change to cure. This is the time where almost everyone, including me, start to cry. Also, the ones who have survived cancer do what is called a survivor lap. This is a special lap for all those special people that have kicked cancer's butt!

Raising money is a big part of the Relay event. The money that all of the relay teams make help to fund programs that the American Cancer Society offers to cancer patients and helps fund the research for different types of cancer treatments. In order for the teams to raise money they have little events. Sometimes they collect dimes and try to fill up a bottle. Others like to do car washes. It is the little things that can help make a huge difference in the world. Some teams even do bake sales or have lemonade stands! These teams will do almost anything to help raise money for this horrible disease!

Just like the Hurricane Sandy victim said, "I watched images of hurricanes in previous years and felt bad for those people. Now I am one of them," only the cancer patient would say, "I have many relatives with cancer and felt really bad for them. It is hard to think that I am now one of them." Relay for Life is very compassionate to people such as this by giving hope to those with cancer, honoring the ones who have died and lived, and by raising money for cancer patients. A few years ago, I lost my Nonnie to intestinal cancer that had spread to her kidney and liver. I watched her as she took her last breath. The Relay for Life is a way for me to honor not only her, but millions of others that have died as a result of cancer. That is why I Relay! So keep calm and Relay On!

Callie Keen  
Third Place, Grade 7

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A whoosh in the night a mysterious stranger walks up to a homeless man gives him a warm meal and disappears before a thank you is uttered. This stranger just displayed something that you don't need the cloak of night to show. It is called compassion and it is comprised of a number of

things. A simple concoction: one part magnanimity, one part selflessness, and one part amiability, and no lab necessary!

The first trait we will add to the test tube is magnanimity, a trait everyone should have. A magnanimous person displays a noble generosity. Ms. Barnes was brought to tears by the generosity shown to her by the Adopt-A-Family organization. The Delaware State News reports, "They have helped me so much this Christmas I could just cry," were her exact words. Helping your fellow man in a time of strife is compassion no doubt. Those that adopted Ms. Barnes's family were not giving in hopes of receiving something in return. They felt in their hearts the need to give to those that need it, showing true compassion.

To continue our scientific experiment we need now some selflessness. To do something without thought to how it affects oneself sounds like real selflessness. In a classic tale of rebirth Jimmy Valentine, a con recently released back into the free world after being tried and convicted for safe cracking goes back to a life of crime right from the get-go. Valentine develops a newfound heart of gold when he sees Annabel Adams walking down the street. Jimmy immediately transforms into a new man who goes by the name of Mr. Spencer. It seems a little too late when Detective Ben Price, a take no nonsense cop with sharp wits, uncovers Valentine's disguise and formulates a plan to arrest him. Then in the end after witnessing Valentine put his criminal skills to good use by saving a little girl locked in a safe Ben decides to let Jim go free in a confrontation that went like this. Valentine states "Well let's go. I don't know that it makes much difference, now...." Price responds, "Guess you're mistaken Mr. Spencer . . . Don't believe I recognize you." Now doing this kind of thing could've landed Detective Price in the big house, but that wasn't on his mind. He was thinking of helping Jim get a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance at life. At no time was Ben thinking of getting something back from Jimmy later, he was just focused on how he could help him.

Bonding the already powerful mixture with some amiability is all that's left to do, and this particular dose will come straight from my own life. Kindness and friendliness with no end make up amiability. Ms. Raughley, a teacher at Smyrna Middle School, is always amiable towards everyone but especially me. She always goes out of her way to check up on me and see how I'm doing even though I'm not really her student anymore. She even has the exceptional skill to remain professional while conversing with me on a personal level. Don't get me wrong being amiable isn't being a teacher who is "cool", "hip", or "down with the kids" it's being the person who takes that extra step to connect with someone.

Now a superhuman concoction of incomprehensible compassion has been created. Everyone has the ability to put magnanimity, selflessness, and amiability together to make compassion; actually putting forth the effort to do so is an achievement. During this experiment it became apparent that compassion is needed in our society. Without it everyone would be alone through his or her hardships instead of being able to get help from a friend. Now we need to increase the dwindling amount of compassion in the world. Now ask yourself, "Who do I see that needs a little compassion?"

Javon Garnett  
First Place, Grade 8

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Anne Frank once said, “No one has ever become poor by giving.” This quote refers to compassion because it won’t hurt you to help other people. You’ll feel richer with happiness, not poor by giving things away. You are still helping at least one person. Compassion is being selfless and willing to be generous for the well being of others. To have compassion is to be helpful to other people’s needs, being considerate, and being thoughtful.

The first trait of compassion is helping with the needs of others. Helping with the needs of others relates to compassion because some people can’t take care of themselves based on their situation. Stephen M. Silverman reports about a New York City police officer buying shoes for a homeless man. The article explains a police officer in New York buying a pair of shoes for a homeless man with no shoes. This is an example of compassion because someone would spend his or her own money in this economy just to help another person that is not doing so well in the game of life. The police officer didn’t show hatred, but compassion because he bought shoes for a person in need that couldn’t help himself. It was a very cold night and he, the homeless person, was barefoot. The officer himself was cold.

The second trait of compassion is thinking in best intentions and being considerate. To be considerate means looking out for others and believing in their full potential. An example from Thank You M’am that shows best intentions is, “But from here on in, son, I hope you will behave yourself.” This is a good example because despite all that has happened to them, she still wants him to be a good person in society and help his life stay in focus. If he behaves, that could solve a possible chain of criminal activity. Being considerate is not being forced to give something to someone; it’s doing it out of the kindness of your heart.

The third trait of compassion is thoughtfulness. Being thoughtful is a good trait of compassion because you are being mindful of other people. An example from my life, of thoughtfulness, is through my mom. She goes to work, goes to school, and makes sacrifices in here life for me. This is a good example of being thoughtful because she doesn’t have to do all the things she does. She wants me to have a good life and would give up her own life for me. Then, we go into a big argument about how we would both do it to each other. ☺ Being thoughtful does not have to be responsible, it’s being mindful of other people’s emotions.

Being considerate, thoughtful, and helpful to others’ needs, shows a compassionate person at work. Compassion is important because other people will always benefit from acts of compassion. People should be compassionate because everyone wants to feel worthy or have a warm feeling in your heart. If there were no compassion on our planet, there would be bitterness and violence everywhere. Nothing would get done or be accomplished. If everyone just showed a little bit of compassion, the world would be a happier and greater place.

Sara Field  
Second Place, Grade 8

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Often compassion is seen as a part of everyday life, but it’s much more than that. It is the one quality that differentiates us from the many wild animals that coexist on this planet. There are many humans who can’t talk, but when has anyone seen a tiger roar for one that couldn’t? There is compassion all around us, in literature, our everyday lives, and the overall world in general

and it's there for a *very* good reason. As individuals it may not always be evident that such a thing exists, but as a united people we cannot be stopped in the act of showing this extraordinary trait. This can range from the average police officer to a teenage girl providing for and protecting her family, and even the typical kid. True compassion requires a sense of selflessness, courage, and humanity.

In the world around us, everywhere you look people are doing kind, heartwarming, and completely selfless things that many might overlook. Then there's that one person that stands out and demands your full attention. NYPD officer Larry DePrimo is one such person. He gave brand new boots to a homeless man he saw on patrol. Jennifer Foster, an eyewitness said, "The officer squatted down on the ground and proceeded to put socks and the new boots on this man. The officer expected NOTHING in return...". It is this kind of selfless action that shows true compassion. Had the officer expected something in return many would say it was rude, certainly uncompassionate, and possibly even cruel.

The world is not the only place one might find such endearing acts, but in movies and literature as well. Take this example from *The Hunger Games* "With one sweep of my arm I push her behind me. "I volunteer!" I gasp. "I volunteer as tribute!" Many might consider this mere selflessness, having nothing to do with courage, but those people would be wrong. How many people do you know that'd openly volunteer to an event that they knew only one person out of *twenty four* would survive. Katniss could've stayed home, but instead risked her life for her sister, *that* takes true courage.

Humanity is a major part of my everyday life and compassion couldn't exist without it. I've always had a vast understanding of the physically and mentally impaired. My cousin has cerebral palsy, and she's taught my family a lot, particularly about humanity. How many times have you walked by a disabled person and made a point of looking away, thinking they don't want to be stared at? Next time smile and say Hi! It just might brighten their day.

Compassion is a trait within us all. It is the one trait that separates us from any other species. Being compassionate costs nothing, but the rewards are endless. Selflessness, courage, and humanity are all individual aspects of compassion, but compassion encompasses them all in one single act. Take some extra time to think of how others are feeling, and truly consider others feelings.

Justin Nash  
Third Place, Grade 8

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*Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12*



A world without compassion for me would be an extremely desolate and cold place. What is a world without compassion to you? The word “compassion” has greatly changed the path in which my life was headed, and I am only fourteen years of age. One local Smyrna woman Dr. Ruthie Franczek, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, is the greatest display of a compassionate person that I know. Dr. Franczek’s amount of compassion exemplifies the true value and importance of compassion in our society, exponentially, and on a daily basis. Compassion in our society does not start with gigantic steps; it is the small steps that initiate and demonstrate compassion, and these small steps make important improvements. Compassion is a valuable and important part of our society which starts with baby steps, such as helping individuals, our community, and eventually the world is impacted, just by one person.

The value and importance of compassion is not measured by the greatness of a person’s act, but in the impact it has on the person who was helped. Compassion is not a broadcasted performance, but an unconscious act of changing somebody’s life, miniscule or huge, in a better way. Whether it be someone picking up the books someone dropped, a small yet meaningful act of compassion, or the action of putting oneself out and opening their arms to help someone. This is exactly what Dr. Franczek does. I am an avid horseback rider, but when my parents divorced, the finances were cut in half and the future of my horse and I as a team seemed unsecure and dark. I feared that my days with my horse were limited, until compassion changed the path of my horse and I. Dr. Franczek, being a family friend, opened her arms so kindly and promised that I could always keep my horse at her private home if the need arose. My horse was moved to Dr. Franczek’s home and the dark path now did a 180 and I got to keep the horse that I loved and was my best friend. Dr. Franczek by no means had to generously welcome me and allow me to keep my horse there; she is not paid board or receiving any benefit from the situation. It was out of the kindness of her heart that she reached out and showed the immense demonstration of compassion. Without this act of compassion, my life would be very dark and bleak for having to live without my best friend, and in my case this changed my life. Now I am given the opportunities I thought I would lose at one point. Community service, responsibility, knowledge, skill, wisdom, and greater prospects, all of which were gained by the activities with my horse. Without Dr. Franczek, I could not have these. This act of compassion is a perfect example because it was valuable as well as extremely important, and although it did not affect millions of people, it had the same immense impact. One little girl got to keep on dreaming days longer. Her life changed because Dr. Ruthie Franczek’s demonstration of compassion gave her the opportunity, therefore it was incredibly essential.

Compassion is not just necessary to exemplify towards one person or even a person at all. The demonstration of compassion in a community or a group can have the same intense impact on multiple people, or even animals. Dr. Ruthie Franczek is also another great example in the display of compassion in your town, as she greatly helps the community and other organizations daily. Being a veterinarian, Dr. Franczek possesses great skills that few and far between acquire. Dr. Franczek uses the rare skills to help her community, all the while being compassionate and helping people. For the Smyrna-Clayton community and other surrounding areas, she holds dog and cat vaccination clinics. These clinics allow people to come to a pet store, or another location in the community, and get their pets vaccinated, but at a lower cost than expensive veterinary offices. Using her skills to help the community, especially through these tough economic times, and allowing them to care for their pets properly is an amazing display of compassion. Not only does Dr. Franczek use her skills for vaccination clinics, but she also donates her time for community service and donates to charity. Demonstration of compassion can be done by

everyone, because everyone possesses a special skill or ability, and this skill used for good can greatly impact the community around them. The value of using your skills for good is extremely high because it can deeply impact many people, as well as it is tremendously important.

Whether your acts of compassion affect one of one trillion people, it still is extremely valuable and important. No one in this world is perfect, and at least once in life, someone else is in need of a shoulder to lean on. This other shoulder shows compassion and helps one stand back up to continue onto the path we travel. A world without compassion is no world at all. Everyone relies on someone else at one point and people work together to get through struggles. Compassion keeps our world spinning as the days go by, therefore it is priceless and extremely significant.

Compassion is a valuable and important part of our society which starts with baby steps such as helping individuals, our community, then eventually the world in impacted; just by one person, and is extremely necessary in our world. Dr. Ruthie Franczek is the greatest example that there is of a compassionate person and it is people such as herself who keep this world going round and round. I hope to continue on and display compassion such as she does, because her acts have impacted me so much. If everyone continues on the feeling and greatness of compassion the planet we call home can be so much better. Whether it is helping one person or an entire community, people need to exemplify compassion; it is vital. Compassion starts out by helping one person, and sometimes giving that one person a boost, then leads to helping multiple people, and eventually the compassion spreads and that one act of compassion leads to the world spinning around. Now how can you move forward and demonstrate compassion to help the world?

Gabrielle DiRusso  
First Place, Grade 9

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What is compassion? It is stated in the dictionary that compassion “can be defined as a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.” Here at the Smyrna School District, it is defined as understanding or deep feeling for others regardless of any such things as race, age, creed, or even social understanding. Kindness, generosity, forgiveness, caring, friendship, love and sharing toward everyone are a part of this deep feeling and understanding.

I am writing this essay to demonstrate that there is much value and importance in exhibiting compassion. Compassion is something that is deeply needed among people of all kinds. If none were to be displayed, a world of hate would be all that exists. As Dalai Lama has once said, “Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.” Lack of compassion given to an individual can easily create a person full of hatred, their thoughts forever trapped in an endless track of malevolence. They would suffer day after day. However, those who show others an abundance of compassion can help sculpt a person to being a much more kind and generous individual.

Life for our society right now is most definitely strenuous. It has cause immeasurable anguish, and people do really need compassion. Kindness, caring, and love can make a person feel much

better in this time of need. If one feels better about something, the likelihood of them being overly stressed out may decrease. Generosity and sharing towards all people is making a difference in those who are very desperate in these times. For example, people have donated time, money, and effort to the people who have gone through the worst of hardships such as loss of home and possessions due to a massive storm. Volunteers that help them out have assisted in putting an end to their sufferings.

Let us not forget that it isn't only society itself that undergoes agony without compassion, but life in school does as well. Several students have gone through a lot just because of the lack of compassion they may receive. One of the worst parts about this is that some don't get compassion from many just because of those who regard their race, age, creed, or social understanding. There is a considerable amount of students who end up committing suicide due to the fact that they are just not accepted, whether it is because they are a different race than others or they are a different social status or for other reasons similar to that. Albert Einstein has stated before that "our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty." Einstein is absolutely correct about this. We would eliminate a wide range of issues throughout schools if we follow these words of Einstein.

In conclusion to this essay, showing compassion is very valuable and foremost essential. I believe that compassion is vital to humanity and something that is certainly needed among leaders in order for them to help create a better society. The leaders who do achieve in demonstrating compassion are the ones who succeed in becoming an admirable leader. So, for an individual to become a righteous leader or for a society to become righteous as a whole, it is suggested that you must consider compassion to aid you in completing this task. I think it is needless to repeat myself on how vastly imperative compassion is.

Emaline Innerarity  
Second Place, Grade 9

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"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive." ~ Dalai Lama. That quote can pretty much sum up what compassion is. It is a necessity, which you need in life. It doesn't matter what race you are, the color of your skin, or the religion you believe in; all that matters is do you have compassion in your heart? Without compassion, I believe we will fall apart and turn against each other. Compassion plays a key role in life, and we wouldn't survive without it.

Compassion has become a lost art in this society because people hardly show any love and care for others anymore. People now are only worried about themselves and act as to where they just show no compassion for anyone. Compassion keeps us together as a society. There are a lot of examples; such as, there is a lot of crime going on in this world, more than there has ever been. Also, racism still exists to this day and many people just don't care about any of this.

Before a major terrorist attack in 2001, many said there was hardly any compassion, but it took a terrorist attack to bring us all together, and to have compassion for one another. It shouldn't take a whole terrorist attack to show something that you are supposed to show all the time. Around

here in Smyrna, it took suicides from a different school to show compassion. We need compassion to be a happy society and without it in some cases, tragedy is the result.

Compassion is important because how do you operate without it? Some examples that we still have a little bit of compassion are that Barack Obama, who has an amazing story based on hope and compassion, was sworn in as the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. Also, with compassion, we defeated one of the most dangerous terrorist organizations to ever exist. Compassion can help you do a lot of things, a lot of great things; you've just got to have it in your heart.

Compassion is what we need to survive, and without it, how will we live to be a great society? It's obviously important to have and demonstrate compassion. Remember, compassion is not just love and hope, it's the principle of companionship and God blessed ways.

Reggie Ruff  
Third Place, Grade 9

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*"Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive."*

Although many people consider compassion to be something disposable, something that can be thrown away or forgotten, it is not. Compassion isn't a luxury. It is something that we need to survive as people and as a society. The world revolves around compassion because it is something happy. We have so much violence in the world. Compassion is what brings out the good in people. Compassion is the love and care and generosity of people. Compassion isn't just something that singular people need, either. It is something that society needs. As a whole, compassion brings us together. The love and kindness brings us closer together and makes us happier and healthier. Compassion isn't just something that *people* need; it is something that *society* needs.

Compassion is directly linked to happiness and being healthy. This is because compassion is contagious. Once one person is compassionate, it encourages other people to be compassionate. When you have a group of people who are compassionate and kind, this creates a happy society. All these people grouped together are just spreading the generosity and goodness all around. A good example of this is a food pantry. One person starts the food pantry out of the kindness of their heart, and more continue to join them. As more people join them, more people come to the food pantry. All of the happy attitude and compassionate outlook on the situation brings a more positive community group. This promotes a compassionate atmosphere. This proves the fact that compassion is contagious. Compassion leads to healthier and happier societies as a whole.

Compassion does many things to people. A main perk of being compassionate is that it not only makes *you* more confident, it makes those *around you* feel more confident. If you are compassionate towards other people, you are being kind to them. This raises confidence and self-esteem. Compassion helps raise society out of its self-image based tendencies. If someone tells you that you're nice or that you are doing a great job, not only are they showing compassion, they are raising people's confidence. Compassion is necessary in society in this aspect because being confident is being happy and being happy is what makes a healthy society. Compassion is like fuel to a fire. It ignites something, and it keeps feeding the flames.

Compassion is a promoter of equality. Compassion is blind kindness. This kindness is something that is missing in a lot of societies. Being compassionate means that you don't judge based on race, age, gender, religion, etc. This means that compassion is blind. Those who are compassionate don't care if you're black or white, or 20 or 90, or Buddhist or Methodist. Showing compassion is doing something without even caring about who you're being kind and generous to. Compassion promotes equality. Those who run food pantries and shelters and even those who are counselors, they don't mind how old you are, or what you've done. They just genuinely want to be kind.

Compassion isn't a luxury. It is something we need. Compassionate people and compassion in general, is what we should be looking up to. Compassion could be a law in itself. Compassion doesn't just mean being kind to one person, it means being kind to all people. Compassion is something we need as a society. It brings people together and it introduces a more positive outlook on life. Compassion opens many doors and gives people many opportunities to advance in life. Compassion isn't just a word or a value. It is a way of life, and a key to success and happiness.

Alexis Williams  
First Place, Grade 10

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Albert Einstein stated, "Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty." If people need to follow laws, be responsible for their actions, and show respect for themselves and their country, why not a need to show compassion? People, as a whole, need to show more compassion, or humanity cannot survive.

The meaning of compassion is the sympathetic pity and concern for the sufferings or misfortunes of others. This concern should be a priority because it is the correct thing to do. By showing compassion, one becomes a better person. Just by holding the door for someone, or telling someone they look nice, can make one's day. The Golden Rule, which is "Treat others how you wish to be treated," has been an important rule for two thousand years. Showing compassion will also get one well-liked, because people will know that that is a caring person, willing to help. People should also remember that many others are worse off than themselves; whether it be lack of food, sleep, or money. One does not want to seem selfish.

An additional reason for compassion is that it makes one feel better about one's self. When one shows it, not only does it help gain confidence, but it also builds the others' self-esteem. Giving and helping others makes one feel good inside, knowing that one can help someone else when they are down. Showing compassion also makes for good character. By putting oneself in the shoes of others and trying to understand what they feel and need, can make one realize that one should feel grateful for what one has. This may lead to giving to the less fortunate. People will know you as one with good character, which is something to be proud of.

The last and most important reason compassion should be a necessity for everyone is because we all depend on each other. When disasters occur, like Hurricane Sandy that is a time when people need to help each other: to fix damages, supply food, and provide shelter. Also, when one is

down, they go a long way, and that is what we need more of in society. We are all interconnected. Other countries may be less-fortunate than ours, and it is the job of all Americans to help them out in times of need. Then, when it is the other way around, we will receive their compassion. If one thing is corrupted, it affects us all. That is why everyone and everything contributes to life.

In conclusion, compassion is a trait that is seldom focused upon, but needs to be recognized more often. As said by Mason Cooley, “Compassion brings us to a stop, and for a moment we rise above ourselves.” That is because when one shows compassion, one is rarely aware of doing so. If our society is to be successful in the future, compassion will need to be a necessary part of it.

Ally Vance  
Second Place, Grade 10

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Times are tough now and people are suffering more today. The world needs more people that are compassionate. People are worse off today so more people should rise up and show compassion to others in their communities. Compassion makes the world a better place for everyone. Compassion drives the world forward and people forward. When people show compassion it brings people together to make their community a better place for everyone. If we know what compassion is we can learn how to help others and how we can benefit from it?

First the question is what is compassion? Compassion is a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering. You help those who need help and don't expect anything in return. Compassion can be shown by donating and volunteering. Compassion means that you care about others and their situations. You support others and your community. When you are compassionate it means that you will go out of your way to help those that need help.

Second there is a societal need for compassion. People are suffering in these hard times. They need our help so we have to be compassionate to them. It brings communities together and when everyone works together people can be more efficient in helping others such as opening food drives and provide donations. If one person is compassionate others will follow to help make the community a better place for everyone and to help the less fortunate. The compassion from people can help to eliminate poverty. In desperate times compassionate people are making a difference. They donate their time and money to help others.

Lastly there is the universal appeal of compassion. People that are compassionate are looked up to and praised for their caring and compassionate nature. They make a difference in people's lives and people are grateful for it. Communities want to follow compassionate rulers because they will come out and help the community and others. People feel good and they feel that they are really making a difference in people's lives. It makes you feel great when you know that you just made someone's situation a little better just by donating some money or food or by volunteering at different places. Compassionate people bring the world together and drive it forward.

As you can see compassion can only help others and us. If we now what compassion is we can make this world a better place for everyone and ourselves. Compassion can drive us forward and our communities. People that are compassionate can help those that can't help themselves. If we all volunteer and donate we can make a difference. Now let's all go and help our neighbors and community!

John Schmidt  
Third Place, Grade 10

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Compassion – a feeling of deep sympathy for another stricken by misfortune, accompanied with a strong desire to alleviate it. At least, that's what the dictionary tells us. Everyone interprets compassion differently; whether it means to understand and share deep feelings for another or being kind to those who need it. In our society, people need compassion because life is difficult for them. Demonstrating compassion is important because it alleviates suffering and sorrow, inspires hope, and humanity would cease to exist without it.

Compassion can play a large part in alleviating suffering and sorrow. By demonstrating compassion, you show that you care about a person and they feel better knowing that. In hospitals, people that are visited by friends and family have more vivacity than people who are alone, no matter how sick or injured they both may be. If you, for hypothetical purposes, were admitted to the hospital with pneumonia, wouldn't you feel better being surrounded by friends and family than being alone? Hospital patients can feel better even with the gift of a stuffed bear from a stranger.

Within our society, people that live difficult lives need hope. When people need a reason to keep on fighting, hope can see them through. The problem is that hope comes in short supply these days. People can go through life, never so much as hearing a kind word from anyone. If someone, anyone, were to show compassion then who knows what could happen. People can help to inspire hope into people by paying it forward. Paying it forward is the ideal that if you help a person, for no reason at all, they will be more likely to help someone else. Could you imagine our society being full of people helping one another?

Without compassion, there would be no humanity. Imagine a society where no kind words are uttered, where people alienate themselves from others. If compassion ceased to exist, that would be your life. Everyone's life. Compassion connects us to each other, and allows us to empathize, sympathize, and care for others. In the story, "The Little Match Girl," everyone turned a blind eye to her, ignored her. By doing this she lost hope and lit the matches she was supposed to sell. Inside the flames, she found things she had yearned for all her life. When morning came, she was found frozen in an alley way. If compassion ceased to exist, that little girl could become someone you know...maybe even you.

Compassion – a deep feeling for and understanding of others. Everyone has a different definition of compassion. Without compassion in our lives, humanity would cease to exist, no one would inspire hope, and suffering and sorrow would not be alleviated. People need to demonstrate compassion to save the little match girls of our society. The question it all comes to is this: do you have the compassion to save her?

Caitlin Conrad  
First Place, Grade 11

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What is the importance of compassion? According to the Dalai Lama, “Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.” One only has to listen to the nightly news to see the truth behind this statement. Without compassion, there would be no organizations around to help people in need, people experiencing hardships would have no hope, and suffering would be widespread.

First of all, charities and organizations such as the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, Good Will, and countless others rely on volunteers and donations to support those in need. For instance, about 96% of the American Red Cross workers are volunteers. During the recent Hurricane Sandy, almost 6,000 of those volunteers came from various parts of the country to help those on the east coast who were suffering from major hardships. By the same token, millions of dollars and thousands of volunteers gave hope to those whose whole lives were destroyed by the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. There’s no doubt that without the compassion of volunteers, the charities and organizations that help others wouldn’t exist.

This takes us to the idea that without compassion, there would be no hope. Imagine having children to feed and having no money to buy food. If you live in Delaware then you have hope because the Food Bank of Delaware is able to service 250,000 people over six million pounds of food a year, of which about 90% is donated by compassionate people and businesses. In the same way, hundreds of families in our own community are fed by the various donations made to the Smyrna-Clayton Ministerium by caring individuals. Simply stated, the compassion of some people gives hope to other people in need.

Finally it is only through compassion that widespread suffering can be ended. In other words, areas hit by famine, war, and other catastrophic events depend on the compassion of volunteers for survival. Specifically, thanks to UNICEF, an organization supported almost entirely by volunteer contributions, millions of people living in the Horn of Africa have been saved by famine. Furthermore, organizations such as World Vision help over 50 million people in over 5 continents, all through the compassion of volunteers. When you look at it this way, the suffering of those unable to help themselves would continue without end, if it were not for the heroes that unselfishly give their time, talents, and money.

When all is said and done, it is only thanks to those individuals who can put themselves in the place of others and understand their needs that organizations and charities exist to give hope to those in need and help bring an end to their suffering. The compassion of these individuals makes a difference in the lives of others. In whose life have you made a difference?

Justin Gordy  
Second Place, Grade 11

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As I sat at home working on my English homework, I stumbled upon a familiar word in the dictionary. The word was compassion. Compassion can be expressed and shown in many different ways, but ultimately has the same definition. Compassion can be defined as a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering. The elaborate definition of compassion forced me to think shy compassion is important. Compassion is important because it goes hand in hand with love, it gives people hope, and without compassion, people could go into deep states of depression.

Although compassion and love are two different things, they need each other to exist. It is impossible to show compassion without showing love. For example, if you are walking down the street, and see an older lady that needs help carrying her bags to her car and you decide to help her, then that is showing compassion and love. Compassion was shown because you went out of your way to help a stranger. Love was demonstrated because if you had no love for the older woman, then you would have most likely walked right past her.

Also, showing love and compassion is important because it gives people hope. A wise man once said, “our human compassion binds us the one to the other – not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future.” Look at all the people who are affected by Hurricane Sandy. Now imagine if nobody showed compassion for the victims; what would their lives be like now? They would probably be dying of starvation and different diseases from being exposed to the elements. Those people would have no help and no hope for the future. As you can see on different news reports, many people have hope. They believe that in time, things will get better.

As you can see, giving people hope is extremely important. When you show compassion, it is just as important as getting compassion back. I’ve experienced firsthand the importance of getting love back. A wise thing to do when showing compassion is not to expect anything in return. Showing compassion is not about what you could get out of it, but also about how someone else can benefit from your love. Even when I’ve had friends that didn’t return acts of compassion to me, I still continued to show compassion in the hopes that one day, they would return the favor.

Therefore, showing compassion is important because it goes hand in hand with love, gives people hope, and without it, people could become upset and depressed. The most important thing to remember is that no matter what the situation, always show compassion. If we expect the world to be a better place, then show more love. Evil can’t overcome evil, but love can.

Denae Brown  
Third Place, Grade 11

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Beauty cannot be seen if ones eyes are shut, but beauty can be felt with compassion. In life most of us come across an outreach of kindness, at least once, that gives hope that all people can be good. Then there are a select few in the world that are able to come across or experience an act of compassion so great that it creates a warm feeling in the heart, and makes you want to do good for others. That would be a domino effect in the act of compassion, or as some may say, pay it

forward. If everyone in the world believed that to be true, the happiness that could be experienced throughout the globe would be exponential.

Life is not always easy and having a helping hand can make the most terrible day turn good for some people. When we do something nice for someone, some may say that good karma will come back around. This is true in most scenarios. No one can force the act of compassion upon someone; it is just something that your heart tells you that you should do. Most people, who outreach that kindness towards others, are remembered and given back that kindness times two.

Paying the act of compassion forward gives a sort of high that just makes you feel good. This can help relieve stress and help to live a happier life. The consistent giving of compassion can make the difference in how you succeed in life because it will change your outlook on things. You can allow yourself to invite happiness into your life because you know that you are making a difference in the world. Also you can sit back and watch as the compassion you gave multiplies.

If there has ever been a hard time in your life you know that having someone there for you can help the situation. Whether it is a stranger or a family member, compassion does not have limits and can be given by anyone. From experience, I know that when you are down in life it seems almost impossible to get back up. Sometimes you may even think about giving up. However, having that one person who takes everything they are doing and stops it to make you a priority in your time of need, can make a great percentage of that sadness disappear.

In conclusion, compassion is an incredible and beautiful thing, that we as human beings are capable of giving. In the world we live in it may seem like a new car or phone is the best gift of them all but in reality kindness takes first by a long haul. There will never be a time when someone on this earth does not need help, so outreaching that help should never stop. We should give money to those in need when we can and be there to talk to people who have no one. It's the little things that add up to create the big things. When you step away and look at the big picture, in life we should be there for anyone we can because when all the material things are gone, all we have are each other.

Ashley Lennon  
First Place, Grade 12

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Compassion, a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune. A compassionate person is one who sees the suffering another has to go through and has a strong desire to end that misery. I believe compassion is about the simple things in life that help you or another make it through the day. One of the most compassionate people I know would be my mother.

My father suffers from Parkinson's disease and is currently on disability, which has greatly affected my entire family. Every day it's the same struggles; he can't get out of bed by himself or walk downstairs to the dinner table. He has undergone 3 brain surgeries and currently has a Deep Brain Stimulation system. To help with the disease, he has to take multiple medications and is always going to new doctor's appointments. It truly takes a great deal of effort from him

and my entire family. Through this tough situation, my mother is always there. When my dad needs her help she always drops what she is doing to see what he needs. Sometimes he may be up in bed and call her name every 10 minutes, even though this definitely gets annoying, she goes up and down the stairs multiple times just to help him take his medicine or get a drink. Also, he sometimes has difficulty sleeping at night, and while she still works everyday and wakes up at five-thirty every morning, she shows compassion. If my dad wakes up in the middle of the night, maybe four or five times, she always wakes up to help him adjust his position or some other simple task he physically can't do. It may not seem like much, but I have never seen someone show so much compassion and simply put another human being so far above themselves.

Compassion is truly a huge importance in today's society, not just in my family, but everywhere. I know without my mom, there is no doubt that my dad would be worse off than he currently is. It would be a huge fight for him to do such simple tasks on a day to day basis. My mom sees the struggle he goes through every day, and being such a compassionate person, she wants to help destroy that disease he goes through. As much as it kills me to say it, without my mom, my dad would simply just lay in bed all day, in pain with no true meaning to his life.

I know, for a fact, that my family is not the only one going through something like this, and I truly believe without compassion in this world there would be a lot more suffering and agony. Without the simple encouragement and reliance, there would be no point to some people's lives. It's all about caring for someone, and not just caring for those in need by for everyone. A simple act of kindness goes a long way and could greatly affect someone's life.

Jacqueline Holford  
Second Place, Grade 12

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The worst feeling that a person can experience is feeling that they cannot do something. Imagine having a dream of traveling around the world or becoming a world-renowned chef. To most people, these goals can be reached with perseverance and devotion, but for people with special needs, this may be more difficult. These people have more simplistic dreams like being on a sports team and graduating high school. They constantly feel as if they cannot reach their goals and so the Special Olympics demonstrate compassion by giving them the opportunity to achieve greatness.

The organization has helped the special need since the early 1960's by a woman named Eunice Kennedy Shiver. It has grown from a summer day camp in her backyard to a nationally recognized program. She felt that it was not right for people with disabilities to be discouraged and treated unfairly. Her camp allowed these children to not think about what they could not do but to be rewarded for learning and giving their best effort. Today their mission statement is, "To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for individuals eight years of age and older with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympic athletes and the community." The Special Olympics is compassionate because it has opened

their arms to those who are challenged and embraced what they have to offer by giving the participants a chance to succeed.

Albert Einstein once said, “Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty.” Volunteers of the Special Olympics do just that. They feel sorrow for the participants because these people have been stricken with misfortune and they want to alleviate their suffering. For example, they may simply help this person shoot a basket or win a hundred meter sprint but they have done much more than that. The volunteers have openly formed a friendship; embracing the participant and his or her challenges. With this, the participant is able to experience something that may not occur on a daily basis; being understood and believed in.

Giving special needs athletes hope to make their dreams come true is all that the participant asks for. They see the compassion towards them and really can enjoy themselves. With this, the Special Olympics have caused some inspiring stories to occur. For example, twenty-year-old Dominicks Urbina discovered his passion and horsemanship that helped him follow his dreams. Through the struggles that he faces, the organization has helped him be recognized by his family and friends, which he thoroughly enjoys. Also he was awarded a silver medal at the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece, in 2011. Even Urbina hopes that others will follow his footsteps because the program has showed so much compassion; he was able to become more enthusiastic and courageous.

The Special Olympics would not be as spectacular as it is today if not for the volunteers and the mind set of all those involved. Special needs athletes are welcomed with open arms by their mentors because these mentors know that the athletes can achieve greatness. They know that the athletes have goals that could not be achieved without them. The support means the world to the athletes because the volunteers have been kind, generous, cared, and most importantly, they have formed a friendship. All of these qualities should be demonstrated in our society on a daily basis towards our friends, family, classmates, and everyone around us no matter what race, age, creed, social standing, mental or physical abilities that they have.

Andrea Davis  
Third Place, Grade 12

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## HONORABLE MENTION

### CLAYTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

<i>Alexis Steele</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Clayton "CJ" Lloyd</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Zachary Holthaus</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Patrick Watts</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Cadence Baker</i>	Kindergarten

<i>Cameron Fretz</i>	Grade 1
<i>Bryce Blisard</i>	Grade 1
<i>Jordan Hudson</i>	Grade 1
<i>Allyson Holmes</i>	Grade 1
<i>Madison Battee</i>	Grade 1

<i>Justin Chi</i>	Grade 2
<i>Andrew Rivera</i>	Grade 2
<i>Faith Hewes</i>	Grade 2
<i>Thomas Baldwin</i>	Grade 2
<i>Riddick "Blake" Pierce</i>	Grade 2

<i>Jason McNatt</i>	Grade 3
<i>Antonio Tardive</i>	Grade 3
<i>Alexa Lehnert</i>	Grade 3
<i>Joyce Pacana</i>	Grade 3
<i>Madison Pearce</i>	Grade 3

<i>Hannah Osborne</i>	Grade 4
<i>Alivia Carl</i>	Grade 4
<i>Zachary Cosme</i>	Grade 4
<i>Shawn Swanson</i>	Grade 4
<i>Reginald "Reggie" Carter</i>	Grade 4

### NORTH SMYRNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

<i>Jai'Dyn Reeves</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Christopher Grantland</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Warren Coates</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Linnea Bailey</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Jenna Vannoy</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Briona Milburn</i>	Kindergarten

<i>Jaun Fowler</i>	Grade 1
<i>Tobias Crawford</i>	Grade 1
<i>Kyrin Patterson</i>	Grade 1
	Grade 1
	Grade 1

<i>Mia Schultz</i>	Grade 2
<i>Dylan Pham</i>	Grade 2
<i>Maurice Ruff</i>	Grade 2
<i>Bahsil Laster</i>	Grade 2
<i>Gabryela Pino</i>	Grade 2

<i>Kylee Matyniak</i>	Grade 3
<i>Bryce Mullen</i>	Grade 3
<i>Kelly Barr</i>	Grade 3
<i>Brenna Bowers</i>	Grade 3
<i>Rasean Lemon-DeJesus</i>	Grade 3

<i>Katrina Porter</i>	Grade 4
<i>Elijah Cintron</i>	Grade 4
<i>Victoria Jordan</i>	Grade 4
<i>Janae Johnson</i>	Grade 4
<i>Emma Rosado</i>	Grade 4
<i>Angelique Dayton</i>	Grade 4

### SMYRNA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

<i>Angel Hardy</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Katelynn Christine</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Paisley Cole</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Alex Gaynor</i>	Kindergarten
<i>Nathaniel Wagner</i>	Kindergarten

<i>Nathaniel Hornberger</i>	Grade 2
<i>Katie Passwaters</i>	Grade 2
<i>Nazir Jenkins</i>	Grade 2
<i>Malie Timmons</i>	Grade 2
<i>Nasir Jones</i>	Grade 2
<i>Brian Wright</i>	Grade 2

<i>McKelden Miller</i>	Grade 1
<i>Jacob Wagner</i>	Grade 1
<i>Madison Sparrow</i>	Grade 1
<i>Daniel Maina</i>	Grade 1
<i>Inayah Jackson</i>	Grade 1

<i>Ian Murphy</i>	Grade 3
<i>Eryn Cain</i>	Grade 3
<i>Amiya Carroll</i>	Grade 3
<i>Aislynn Marks</i>	Grade 3
<i>Alison Cherriman</i>	Grade 3

<i>Anabella Tiberi</i>	Grade 4
<i>Jenna Carroll</i>	Grade 4
<i>Jason Lin</i>	Grade 4
<i>Audrey Price</i>	Grade 4

	Grade 4
	Grade 4
	Grade 4
	Grade 4

SUNNYSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

<i>Timothy Porak</i>	Kindergarten	<i>Caymahni Sime</i>	Grade 2
<i>Ava Emrich</i>	Kindergarten	<i>Alexia Inhof</i>	Grade 2
<i>Leah Correll</i>	Kindergarten	<i>Robert Yeager</i>	Grade 2
<i>Edward Kautz</i>	Kindergarten	<i>Elianna Davis</i>	Grade 2
<i>Jordanna Boyce</i>	Kindergarten	<i>Lucas McCleary</i>	Grade 2
<i>McKenzie Thuo</i>	Grade 1	<i>Victoria Seckley</i>	Grade 3
<i>Reaghan King</i>	Grade 1	<i>Jaden Bain</i>	Grade 3
<i>Bryce Daniels</i>	Grade 1	<i>Grant Robinson</i>	Grade 3
<i>Michelle Golding</i>	Grade 1	<i>Matt Gatune</i>	Grade 3
<i>Alex Gates</i>	Grade 1	<i>Rachel Brown</i>	Grade 3
<i>Anna Soldano</i>		Grade 4	
<i>Tymber Mitchell</i>		Grade 4	
<i>Alexandria Supinski</i>		Grade 4	
<i>Christopher Tulley</i>		Grade 4	
<i>Aliya Helm</i>		Grade 4	

JBM INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

<i>Skylar Hass</i>	Grade 5	<i>Fatemah Butt</i>	Grade 5
<i>Keirra Moore</i>	Grade 5	<i>Mia Davis</i>	Grade 5
<i>Matthew Knight</i>	Grade 5	<i>Adrianna Kaminski</i>	Grade 5
<i>Saliah Oliver</i>	Grade 5	<i>Sarah Marine</i>	Grade 5
<i>D'uana Neal</i>	Grade 5	<i>Charity Davis</i>	Grade 5
<i>Anthony Baker</i>	Grade 6	<i>Aaron Lewis</i>	Grade 6
<i>Nadiyah Fisher</i>	Grade 6	<i>Hailey Rees</i>	Grade 6
<i>Mya Montejo</i>	Grade 6	<i>Joey Taylor</i>	Grade 6
<i>Leah Gaynor</i>	Grade 6	<i>Ti'Anniah Chelf</i>	Grade 6
<i>Anthony Dorrell</i>	Grade 6	<i>Jacquira Irvin</i>	Grade 6

CLAYTON INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLSMYRNA MIDDLE SCHOOL

<i>Autumn Coburn</i>	Grade 7
<i>Jadyn Brown</i>	Grade 7
<i>Jessica Glass</i>	Grade 7
<i>Sebastian Battle</i>	Grade 7
<i>Ivy Legar</i>	Grade 7
<i>Briana Henry</i>	Grade 8
<i>Annaleisse Dickerson</i>	Grade 8
<i>Ryan Smith</i>	Grade 8
<i>Kelsey Markel</i>	Grade 8
<i>Justin Stafford</i>	Grade 8

SMYRNA HIGH SCHOOL

<i>Caleb Septer</i>	Grade 9	<i>Paige McNatt</i>	Grade 11
<i>Nina Okorie</i>	Grade 9	<i>Amy Melkas</i>	Grade 11
<i>Caitlin Dennis</i>	Grade 9	<i>Ronae Foxworth</i>	Grade 11
		<i>Antonio Sheldon</i>	Grade 11
		<i>Sabrina Buckner</i>	Grade 11
<i>Heaven Bailey</i>	Grade 10	<i>Chavauna Platts</i>	Grade 12
<i>Karen Cimaglia</i>	Grade 10	<i>Theresa Vaneman</i>	Grade 12
<i>Elizabeth Lewis</i>	Grade 10	<i>Samantha Kitzig</i>	Grade 12
<i>Cayla Carter</i>	Grade 10	<i>Edwin Ortiz</i>	Grade 12
<i>Dominique Demoe</i>	Grade 10	<i>Colin Hovel</i>	Grade 12