Learning Outcomes

Social Responsibility Expectations

☐ Regularly describe themselves in positive terms

☐ Treats others fairly and respectfully, including those who are different in some way.

☐ Shows empathy and can describe others' feelings in an increasing range of situations.

Language Arts

☐ Use an expanding range of strategies including pictorial, graphic, structural and phonic clues to derive meaning.

☐ Listen attentively for a variety of purposes and demonstrate comprehension by retelling or paraphrasing information shared orally.

☐ Create personal writing and/or representations that express connections to personal experiences and/or ideas.

☐ Use a variety of strategies when listening to make and clarify meaning, including making predictions about the content, listening for specifics, recalling and summarizing, monitoring comprehension.

Story Summary

Chrysanthemum loves her unique name and until she goes to school and discovers that not everyone thinks her name is as wonderful as she does. Chrysanthemum learns how difficult and rewarding it can be to be different.
Questions and Activities

Pre-Reading Questions

• Find a picture of a chrysanthemum or the flower and hold it up for students to see. Ask students to describe the name and features of the flower.

• Do you know anyone or animal that also has a name of a flower?

• Who do you think the main character is?

• What do you think the problem is in the story?

* On the pages where the name, ‘Chrysanthemum’ appears have students say her name aloud to promote engagement with the story.

Post-Reading Questions

• How did Chrysanthemum feel about her name before she started school? 
  *She loved her name.*

• Why did her feelings change when she started school? 
  *She was teased about her name.*

• What effect did the teasing have on Chrysanthemum? 
  *She felt bad about herself and her name.*

• What happened in the story to change Chrysanthemum’s sadness? 
  *She used her WITS she walked away, ignored the behaviour and shared her feelings with her family.*

• How could Chrysanthemum reacted in a different way? Would it have made a difference?

• What did we learn about other people’s differences in this story?

• What would you say to Chrysanthemum if you could?
Post-Reading Activities

• There is a large collection of activities to use with the book Chrysanthemum at http://teachingheart.net/kevinideasc.html

• If you have a real chrysanthemum you may use it for dramatic effect by pulling off the petals while describing Chrysanthemum’s feelings as she is being teased.

• Students can study the meaning and origins of their name and find out why their parents gave them this name.

• Fill a table with decorations such as sequins, feathers, ribbons pieces of wrapping paper. Distribute construction paper to students and ask them to write their first name on the paper and decorate it as they wish. Discuss how nobody likely decorated their name in the same way just like nobody in the class is identical.

• Plot the number of letters in each child’s name on a class bar graph.

• Review the characteristics of Henkes’ writing
  - He uses personified mice as characters
  - He uses humour in language and in his illustrations
  - He writes about feelings, anxieties and relationships of children
  - He uses repetition

• Students write a story using Henkes’ writing style and including a WITS strategy.