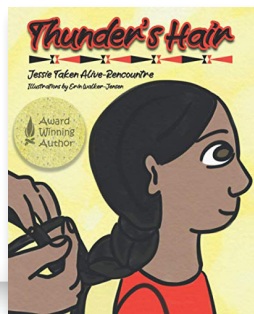


## THUNDER'S HAIR written by Jessie Taken Alive-Rencountre



**Jessie Taken Alive-Rencountre** is a Hunkpapa Lakota winyan. Winyan means woman in Lakota. She is a dancer, mother, writer, wife, and counselor. Previously, she was a school counselor in the Rapid City School District. She is focused on her writing and children's stories. Growing up in Standing Rock, her home reservation in South Dakota, Jessie was surrounded by her Lakota culture and values. This informed her perspective of self and her world view. She learned about cultural values of compassion, kindness, love, unity and forgiveness by witnessing her parents and grandparents ways of being

### »» BEFORE READING

It is best to read together, often. Plan time to read this book to your children or class a few times over the next week.

Make time before reading the book to share the introduction information about indigenous cultures in North America and the decision why many people decide to grow their hair long. It is also important to share about boarding schools and the forceful removal of identity, including cutting children's hair.

### »» READ THE STORY

#### AS YOU READ:

Ask children to notice that Thunder is sharing about how he feels with his mom. They are taking time together in the morning. This is a good time to talk with family about the day, things happening and emotions. Remind children how important it is to share. Remind children how to be good friends and define together what that means.

**Lakota Virtue:** Wowaunsila: compassion and kindness

#### Dates that coordinate:

- October- National Bullying Prevention Month
- July 30th- International Day of Friendship

### »» ACTIVITIES

#### ACTIVITY ONE: SOCIAL EMOTIONAL (Ages 2+ years)

Supplies needed:

- Cotton balls
- Coarse sandpaper
- Cup
- Piece of wood or heavy cloth
- Large clear jar

Explicitly teaching good friendship skills is important. The words kindness, good, mean, cruel, etc. are abstract. By demonstrating what being a good friend is, children can easily remember with gentle reminders. Social and emotional skills like empathy and kindness are not intuitive.

Ask a few of the following questions: When the two boys at recess asked Thunder where his dress was, were they being friendly? When one boy pretended to sing a powwow song and made the "Hollywood Indian" sounds, how do you think that made Thunder feel? Is it ok to pull someone's hair? What do good friends do? How do good friends speak to each other? Do you think Keya is a good friend? How can the way we speak help each other? How can it hurt?



1. To make these traits more tangible, children will use their sense of touch to experience soft and rough and then have time to talk again about the feelings and the difference between kindness and cruelty.
2. Share cotton balls. Offer time for children to touch them, squish them, and rub them on the back of their hands. Ask children how the cotton balls feel. Talk about listening skills and how that can show we are being good friends. For older children, write the words on a classroom word wall or white board including; soft, fluffy, light, etc.
3. Ask children, "If words were cotton balls, how would it feel to have them bouncing off you?" Children can fill their cups with cotton balls and pour it out on each child's arm.
4. Discuss ways to share kind words and phrases like cotton balls including; please, thank-you, compliments, may I help you?, good job, etc.
5. Next, show children a piece of coarse sandpaper. Let each child touch the sandpaper. As they touch it, ask them how the sandpaper feels. For older children, write the words on a classroom word wall or white board again like rough, scratchy, or coarse, bristly.
6. Ask, if words were sandpaper, how would it feel to have them rub on you?
7. Discuss words and phrases like sandpaper. For example: mean words, a mean voice or tone, calling names, unnecessary criticism, etc.
8. Show children how sandpaper can scratch something like the wood or a piece of cloth. Pass it around so they can also scratch the wood or cloth.
9. Note that sandpaper words "scratch" our feelings and that it hurts when people talk to us in a mean voice or say mean things.
10. Place the jar in a prominent location. Any time children use cotton ball words, let them put a cotton ball or two in the cup. When it fills up, celebrate.

## ACTIVITY TWO: COMPLIMENT GAME

(Ages 2+ years)

**Compliment:** when you say something nice about somebody

**Sincere:** free from pretense or deceit; proceeding from genuine feelings.

- This game helps to teach children how to give and receive compliments as well as create respect and kindness.
- During the game every student will give a compliment to one classmate and every student will receive a compliment from another classmate.
- To begin the game, everyone, including adults, sits in a circle with their legs stretched out.
- One child starts by picking a friend, saying their name and giving them a compliment in a loud, clear voice. The child who receives the compliment then thanks their friend and sits criss-cross applesauce to indicate they had a compliment. This child then goes next.
- This [compliment](#) resource from Paige Bessick is perfect.



## ACTIVITY THREE: FLOWER BOUQUET

(Ages 2+ years)

Compliments are a simple and powerful way to foster healthy classroom culture and boost a person's confidence.

Supplies needed:

- Variety of tissue paper, cut to 3"x5"
- Green pipe cleaners
- Scissors
- Tape
- Strips of writing paper
- Colored pencils or markers
- Pencils



**NOTE:** For younger children, if it helps, prepare by doing the first three steps ahead.

This activity is great to do after doing a compliment circle.

1. To make the flowers, stack 4 pieces of tissue paper. Accordion fold beginning at one end, make a ½” fold, then flip the papers over and fold it the other way ½”. Continue to flip and fold until it is all folded.
2. After the paper is folded, cut the ends of the tissue paper into a curve.



3. Lay your pipe cleaner down, then place the center of the accordion rectangle 2” from the top of the pipe cleaner.
4. Fold the pipe cleaner down over the folded tissue paper. Ensure it is tight around the tissue paper.
5. Twist the pipe cleaner several times. This will pull the middle of the accordion fold together and bunch it up.
6. Next, carefully pull the tissue paper sections from the center to the outside, one at a time.



**Extend:** For older children to practice writing, children write one compliment on a strip of paper for each of their classmates. Children can share aloud the compliments they wrote to their friends and then give the papers to classmates. With help, children can attach their compliments to the flower stems.

## ACTIVITY FOUR: KINDNESS TAG

(Ages 2+ years)

### To play the game:

Nominate 1 person to be ‘it’ and share the rules.

### Rules:

When the person who’s it tags someone, they shout “FREEZE” and everyone stops.

The person who was tagged gives a genuine compliment to the person who tagged them. Everyone freezes to listen.

Once the compliment is given the recipient says “Thanks!”, gives a high five and switch.

The person who gives the compliment is now ‘it’ and everyone can start moving again.

## ACTIVITY FIVE: BRAIDING BOARD

(Ages 3 - 5 years)

The Montessori Braiding board engages tactile and visual sensory skills, engaging hand-eye coordination and enhances fine motor skills. It helps strengthen fingers and dexterity to assist with readiness for writing.

The activity develops decision making skills in children as they decide which color cord goes in what order to obtain the correct pattern.

You can purchase a [Montessori Braiding Board](#) or make your own.



### Supplies needed:

- 6”x18” cardboard (one for each child)
- 3 colors of yarn, 16” each
- Hot glue and hot glue gun

1. Attach three lengths of yarn, 1 of each color to the top of the cardboard with a hot glue gun.
2. Show children how to braid, use this 45 second [video](#).
3. You can demonstrate as well, talking through the process.
4. Give children time to practice braiding.

Play With Their Friends? “ by Jane Yolen and Mark Teague

- Offer positive feedback with “I see”, “I hear” statements to reinforce when you notice positive interactions and kind words children use with one another.

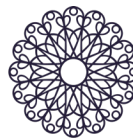
## ACTIVITY SIX: SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL VIDEOS (Ages 2 - 5 years)

1. This one-minute [animated video](#) introduces the term “bullying” and identifies actions that qualify, including the use of hurtful words. Young children relate to the animal characters participating in art class and appreciate the teacher’s clear explanation of the difference between treating others with kindness and respect and harming others with words or actions. Produced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, a transcript of the video is available here: [Yes, that’s bullying](#)
2. This positive two-minute [video](#) about friendship set to Randy Newman’s song, “You’ve Got a Friend in Me,” shows preschoolers treating one another kindly in many ways. After watching the video talk about all the ways that the children are getting along, sharing, and “being nice.”
3. Some Muppet animals sing a song, “Don’t Be a Bully,” in this [Sesame Street clip](#). This video helps reinforce not participating in bullying.

### Here are a additional ways to help children learn more about kindness and friendship:

- Model sharing and kind ways to communicate with others.
- Discuss what qualities make a good friend.
- Give children free opportunities to socialize and help them through difficult emotions.
- Demonstrate how to be a good listener and how to reflect.
- Teach children ways to resolve conflicts by taking time out that is not punishment, talk with children about what happened and how to do better next time together.
- Read this book about friendship. “How Do Dinosaurs

## »» THANKS TO OUR CREATORS:



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“It is with gratitude that we are able to work with other outstanding resources already available and I am truly happy to share those in this set of activities with you.”

-Cary A. Thrall