

TZEDAKAH SEEKER

Grades 2–5

Adapted from on-site and post-visit activities related to our At Home in LA school tour, this lesson is designed for use in your virtual classroom. Through an exploration of everyday objects, students will expand vocabulary, make comparisons, and practice self-reflection.

OBJECTIVE

Tzedakah is the Hebrew word for “justice” and can often be interpreted as “good deeds.” In this lesson, students will explore *tzedakah* through a multicultural lens by learning how different cultures highlight the ways they help others. Students will then think about the everyday actions they can take to make positive change in their own homes, communities, and the world.

MATERIALS

Two at-home activity worksheets: “Good Deeds around the World” and “We are Changemakers.”

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Lead a discussion about the concept of culture. What is culture? How can we describe it? At the Skirball, we define culture as the way of life for a group of people, including what they eat, how they celebrate, and the ways they express themselves.
2. Share the at-home activity worksheet “Good Deeds around the World” and review the directions below.
 - a. Have students work in breakout groups. They can take turns reading the object descriptions to learn about each object’s use, significance, and cultural origin.
 - b. Encourage students to make connections between the objects and their own experiences. Do they have something similar at home? Or in their family tradition or culture?
 - c. As a whole group, discuss what these objects have in common.
3. Share the at-home activity worksheet “We are Changemakers” and review the directions below.
 - a. Have students brainstorm ways they can provide *tzedakah* to their family, community, and the world. Students may use the worksheet individually, in pairs, or in a group discussion. Ideas may include helping a sibling, planting a seed and watching it grow, or writing and sending **Cards of Kindness** to frontline workers and other people they are thankful for.
 - b. As a class, list three steps you can take together to do good in your community.

LESSON ADAPTATIONS/DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING

Cultural Connections: Encourage students to research changemakers within their own culture or community and share their discoveries with the class. Students may also dive deeper into the traditions and practices of cultures represented in the “Good Deeds around the World” worksheet.

Art Making: Using repurposed materials around their home, students can create their own *tzedakah* box to store coins for charity or to collect the good deeds they share with each other, their community, and the world. **Learn how on our Facebook page.**

Community Partners: Identify local community partners who help others. **Check out this virtual map** for organizations in LA County that are making a difference. Explore their available educational resources or reach out to them to find out how you and your class can support their mission.

CONNECT WITH US

Our educators are here to help! If you would like to talk with us about how best to facilitate this activity with your students, or have ideas for how we can support your virtual classroom, please email teacherprograms@skirball.org.

AT-HOME ACTIVITY

GOOD DEEDS AROUND THE WORLD

The objects below represent a few different ways cultures and religions around the world practice *tzedakah* (say: seh-duh-kuh), the Hebrew word for “justice.” *Tzedakah* can often be interpreted as “good deeds.” Look at each object closely and read the description to learn about its cultural origin and how it is used to help others.



ALMS BOWL

Buddhist monks use alms bowls to collect money and food for those in need.



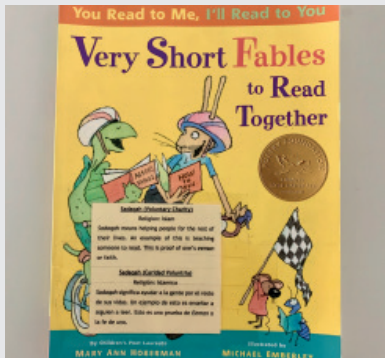
WOVEN BASKET

By teaching and learning the art of weaving, some South African women pass on a valuable skill that can support families and communities.



TZEDAKAH BOX

Jews use these boxes to store coins to donate to a good cause, or to collect the good deeds they share with the world.



SADAQAQ CHARITY

Muslims practice *sadaqah* (say: suh-da-kah), the Arabic word for “the act of helping others.” One example of *sadaqah* is teaching someone to read.



SCOUT BADGE

Girl and Boy Scouts in America earn badges for their good deeds. For example, the Eco Friend Badge is earned by treating outdoor spaces with respect and teaching others how to do the same.



HANDMADE BRACELET

Some Guatemalan families make and sell bracelets like this one. The money they earn helps create organic gardens that provide healthy food and medicine for their community.

After learning about each item, write down what these objects have in common:

AT-HOME ACTIVITY

WE ARE CHANGEMAKERS

You are a *tzedakah* seeker and a changemaker. You can do so much to help!
Use this worksheet to reflect on ways you and your classmates can build a better world.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Things I am good at: _____

Things I like to do: _____

My community's needs: _____

Ways I can use my strengths to help my community: _____

People who can help me take action: _____

DISCUSS WITH YOUR CLASSMATES

Here are the steps we will take to make positive change together:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____