

TITLE: All the Good Things

BOOK: Chicken Soup for the Soul

PAGE: 125

TIME TO READ: 7 minutes

TOPICS: **Making A Difference**
Teacher impact
Acceptance and belonging
Tough stuff—death

AGE LEVEL: Grades 3 and up

SYNOPSIS: A teacher gives an assignment to junior high students to validate each other in writing. This list of positive comments from classmates gets carried to one's grave, and is found to be cherished by several others who are in attendance at the funeral.

NOTES TO TEACHER:

While death is a sub-topic of this story, the focus is on giving and receiving positive feedback during one's *life*.

The “*warm fuzzy*” assignment has been modified and successfully used with all age groups. Fuzzies may be as simple as single words on a credit-card-size paper. They may be an elaborate art project made for every student in the class (*i.e. little furry-yarned creatures, a pipe-cleaner animal, or a decorated piece of candy—all with positive messages attached.*). Or, they may be a compiled list of positive statements, as exemplified in the story. The possibilities are endless! Let your students have fun with this important assignment. Be aware that some angry or immature students may try to use this as an opportunity to write “*cold prickly,*” negative messages. We suggest that you monitor this activity carefully.

Chicken Soup for the Soul
All the Good Things

ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL:

PRE-QUESTIONS:

Name three “things” (*physical items*) that is important to you.

- If you could choose one item that is so important to you that you would carry it to your grave, what would you choose?
- Explain why you selected that item.

Read Story

POST-QUESTIONS:

Were you surprised that Mark, and several of his classmates, had cherished their lists for so many years?

- Explain your answer.

On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the best, how would you rank Mark’s teacher?

- What would it take to make her a 10?
- If you gave her a 10, what qualities did she possess that gained her that ranking?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Complete the “**warm fuzzy**” assignment that follows.

This assignment works well far into the school year, when students know each other fairly well.

Warm Fuzzy Directions

1. These are written, **anonymous** compliments to everyone else in the room. To receive full credit, you should use a different word to describe each person.
2. Focus on **inner qualities** such as humor, friendship, honesty, trust, kindness, etc... Use a Thesaurus for different versions of a similar thought.
3. You may only use three statements about their physical attributes or their abilities like cute, good soccer player, etc... "You like to play soccer" is not a compliment. It is merely a statement about what they like to do. **Make sure that your warm fuzzies are all compliments.**
4. Spend time getting to know your classmates so you can determine their inner strengths. **Do not ask them to describe an inner quality for you.** You must find that inner quality as you interact with them.
5. Make your fuzzies as least as large as a credit card.

**You are a very honest friend
and lots of fun, too!**

6. **Do not sign each fuzzy.** They are to remain anonymous.
7. **Be HONEST!** A false compliment is no compliment at all.
8. These must be **positive.**
9. Your teacher will give you an alphabetical listing of your classmates. Follow that list to make sure that you include everyone. Then place the list on top. It should indicate all of the compliments that you gave to each person on top of your stack of fuzzies.
10. These may be two-dimensional like a deck of cards, or 3-D like a small booklet, a furry creature, a balloon with the message inside, or a decorated candy bar for each classmate.
While it is wonderful to see how creative you can get, remember that it is the **message** that is the intent of this assignment.

Warm fuzzies are due _____ . Your grade will be lowered one full grade for each day it is late.