

## Educator guide: “Zink the Zebra” story activity

### **Recommended for grades:**

2<sup>nd</sup> grade

### **Time:**

2 minutes

### **Vocabulary:**

Use the following list of vocabulary words as a reference for yourself and your students as you complete the “Zink the Zebra” story activity. You may choose to use this list in any way that fits your needs.

- Bullying – when a person hurts another person on purpose, usually repeated over time and there is usually a difference in power
- Clique – a small, close group of friends who may leave others out of the group, may bully others or exclude one friend from the group and gang up on them
- Feelings – emotions such as being happy, sad, excited, scared or angry that can change throughout the day
- Zink the Zebra – a zebra character who has spots instead of stripes, who tells her story to try to teach a message of accepting others who are different than you

### **Activity description:**

The Zink the Zebra story was written by a young girl named Kelly Weil. The story of Zink the Zebra can be used as a starting point for learning about differences. After the activity, you may use the Showing empathy for Zink supplemental activity to reinforce what Zink teaches.



“It all started with a spot.”

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of your students. What you do every day both in and out of the classroom makes a difference in the lives of your students and their families.

We are delighted to learn of your interest in implementing this innovative e-learning content and are grateful for your partnership in taking an active role to reduce bullying. As an introduction to this topic, and on behalf of Children’s Wisconsin, I am pleased to introduce you to the “Zink the Zebra” story, and most significantly, a message that resonates with our children.



Kelly Weil, Age 11

“Zink the Zebra” was written by my 11-year-old daughter, Kelly Weil (1982-1993) who died of cancer. As a result of her experiences Kelly wrote about a zebra named Zink, who has spots instead of stripes.

Although Kelly had numerous challenges with her health, these spots represent the challenges that she faced while battling cancer as a child. Because she was perceived by her peers as different, Kelly experienced the pain associated with the withdrawal of friendships. She was teased based on misconceptions that others had about her physical differences and was ignored by other students, all while she was being treated for cancer. These are the very same behaviors that today we call bullying. Included in Children’s Wisconsin Bullying prevention content is the story that Kelly wrote.

Kelly lost her battle with cancer, but the Zink the Zebra Foundation was formed with a commitment to ensure that Kelly’s story, and that of a brave little zebra who learned to appreciate her differences, lives on. For many years, children have heard Zink’s important messages and have received skills training and advice about bullying and how to safely intervene when it occurs. With Children’s Wisconsin, we have built on the success of the “Zink the Zebra” story for elementary school-aged children by creating this Bullying prevention e-learning content for kindergarten through twelfth grade students.

On behalf of Zink the Zebra Foundation, and my daughter Kelly, I would like to thank each and every one of you who are making a difference in your students’ lives by implementing this content. Every student deserves the opportunity to succeed, grow and develop in a safe, bully-free environment with understanding, compassion, acceptance and respect.

Sincerely,

Les Weil  
Zink the Zebra Foundation



# Supplemental activity: Showing empathy for Zink

## Objectives:

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Write down what they would say to show care and compassion for Zink, a victim of bullying.
- Tell the Zink story to their parent or caregiver at home and ask what their family thinks they should do if they witness or experience bullying.

## Materials needed:

- Printed copies of the Showing empathy for Zink worksheet
- Pencils, crayons and other drawing supplies

## Time required:

30 minutes

## Instructions:

After seeing the story of Zink in the online activity, talk to your class about how they treat other kids who are different than them. See discussion questions below.

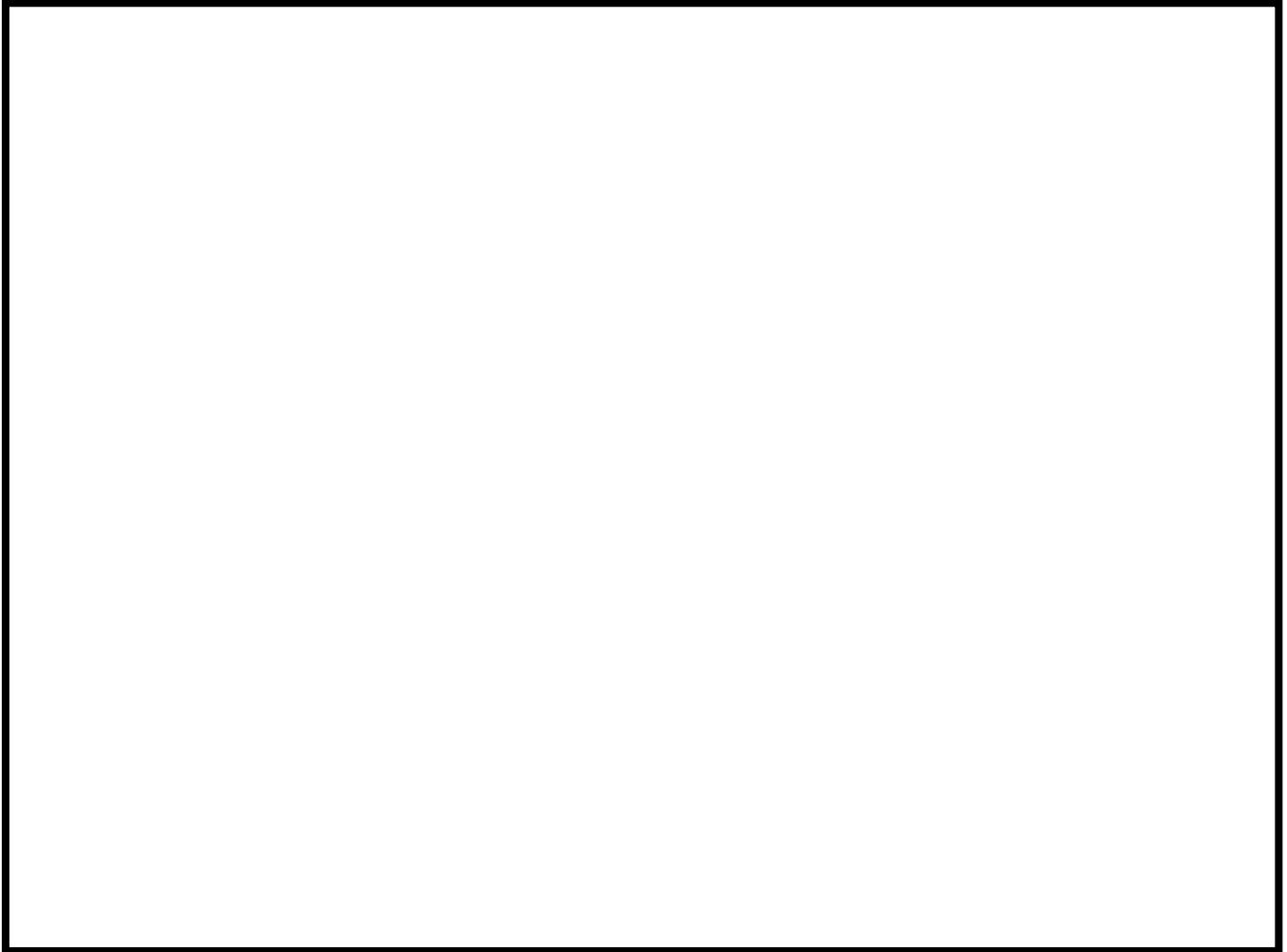
Give each student a copy of the drawing worksheet and ask them to draw a picture of Zink the Zebra and the other animals in the Lipis jungle. They should then write down something friendly that they could say to Zink the Zebra. Then, send your students home to tell the Zink story to their parent, guardian or another adult at home. They can also share their drawing with their family members.

## Discussion questions:

- Do you ever feel afraid or uncomfortable talking to kids who are different, or inviting them to play?
- How do you think you would feel if other kids left you out of activities or treated you differently?
- What could you say to someone you see standing alone or being left out?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Draw a picture of Zink the Zebra and the other animals in the Lipis jungle.



Write down a friendly thing you would say to Zink the Zebra, after she was left out by the other animals for looking different. Try to show empathy. That means you show her you care about how she feels.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing a friendly message to Zink the Zebra.

# Transcript

## Screen 1

Zink the Zebra, a special tale.

## Screen 2

Once upon a time, a zebra named Zink lived in the Lipis Jungle with her mother, her father and her brother Fink.

## Screen 3

Zink was a normal zebra in every way. She had four legs, two ears, one nose, one mouth, one tail ... and spots.

## Screen 4

All the other zebras - even her mother, father and brother - had stripes. Because Zink had spots, the other zebras wouldn't play with her. Because the other zebras had stripes, they thought Zink looked odd.

## Screen 5

One day Fink said to Zink, "Why do you have spots? They're so weird."  
Zink said to Fink, "Why do you have stripes? They're so weird."

## Screen 6

Zink and Fink couldn't decide who was right.  
No one in the Lipis Jungle seemed to have the answer.

## Screen 7

Finally Zink and Fink went home to ask their parents.  
"Which one of us is weird?" they asked.  
"Neither of you," their parents said.  
"Whatever you are is what you are," said their mother.

## Screen 8

"We're all different," said their father.  
"Being different makes you special."

## Screen 9

Then everyone nuzzled ...

## Screen 10

and Zink and Fink went out to play.



Screen 11  
The end.



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Les Weil – Zink the Zebra Foundation

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