Education. Empathy. Empowerment.
Your Global Handprint, Changing the World
Welcome to KidKnits

Welcome. You are about to embark on a journey that will focus on what it means to be a leader in our world today. You will have a chance to begin to think like a Global Leader – learning about unique cultures, experiencing the challenges facing our world today, and reflecting on your role in the future of our world. Is KidKnits a craft project? Yes! You will learn how to knit your very own hat. Is KidKnits a service project? Yes! Through knitting the KidKnits hat, you are helping to support 34 women in Rwanda and 16 women in Chile with employment and empowerment to better their lives. Is KidKnits a leadership program? Yes! While you are knitting your hat, you will also get a chance to reflect on what character traits make a global leader and you will get a chance to understand your own leadership style. Is KidKnits fun? Yes! Get ready to move about the classroom, look through windows, build houses, and get down right crazy. Your learning adventure starts today – and who knows where in the world it might take you. Let’s begin.

So what is KidKnits?

Is KidKnits a craft project? Yes! You will learn how to knit your very own hat and you will be amazed at how easy it can be. Is KidKnits a service project? Yes! Through knitting the KidKnits hat, you are helping to support 34 women in Rwanda and 16 women in Chile with employment and empowerment to better their lives. Is KidKnits a leadership program? Yes! While you are knitting your hat, you will also get a chance to reflect on what character traits make a global leader and you will get a chance to understand your own leadership style. Is KidKnits fun? Yes! Get ready to move about the classroom, look through windows, build houses, and get down right crazy. Your learning adventure starts today – and who knows where in the world it might take you. Let’s begin.

KidKnits is about learning that “you’re never too young to change a life on the other side of the world.”

Ellie, age 9, founder of KidKnits
Global poverty, the environment, homelessness, hunger – the challenges that our world is facing are large. These problems are not unsolvable but each of us is needed to face these challenges. The world needs YOU – each of your unique skills, experiences, talents, and views help create your unique Global Handprint. Your talents may be unlike your friend’s, but it may be just the talent that is needed to help solve a world problem. Have you ever thought about what makes you unique? Brainstorm five unique traits about yourself and write them below.

My Global Handprint

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Struggling to find what makes you unique? These thinking questions will help get you started. Do you enjoy doing something after school that makes you smile? What do you talk about with your friends? Do any of your friends ask for your advice on something? Has anyone ever asked for your help? How did you help them? Have you ever been told that you are a good listener or a caring friend? Do you ever notice things that your friends don’t? What class do you enjoy the most at school? What types of books do you enjoy reading? Have you ever been told that you are good at something?
Have you ever heard the saying, “It’s a Small World”? It might seem silly, but the world is getting smaller every day. In the past, it would take weeks to communicate with someone in a country on the other side of the world. Today, we can send a letter to them in less than a second, we can see and talk with them, or we can even work on the same project with them.

You just created your own unique Global Handprint. Leaders understand that every person around the world has their own Global Handprint and that all of us are needed to help change the world. Look at each of the pictures below and find one or two unique things about the pictures and biographies that might contribute to this person’s Global Handprint.

This is Adera. She works with KidKnits in Rwanda and spins the wool into yarn. Adera is the oldest woman that works with KidKnits. She often leads the singing and dancing and helps the new women learn to spin the wool into yarn. She has become a leader and an example to the other women by being generous and humble. She shares her clothes with the other women if they need them, saying, “If I have two of something, I give one away.” Adera is also learning how to read and write before work each day.

This is Margarita. She works with KidKnits in Chile and sews the bags that are used in the KidKnits craft kits. Margarita’s husband passed away earlier this year in a tragic work accident. She is determined to support her family and is using her sewing skills to create an income for herself. She is very creative and also wants to sew school uniforms to help her family.
Leading with Mirrors or Windows?

Hold the mirror in front of your eyes and write your full name on the line below.

Hold the window in front of your eyes and write your full name on the line below.

How clearly were you able to write your name when you had a mirror in front of your eyes? Were you able to write more clearly with the window in front of your eyes? Which person navigated the obstacle course more effectively, the person holding the mirror or the window?

Have you ever seen someone yawn and then felt the need to yawn yourself? Did you know that when newborn babies hear other newborn babies cry, they will also start crying? Did you know that even our pets feel sad with us when we are feeling blue? This is empathy in action.

Empathy refers to caring about how another person is feeling. The concept is often described as “putting yourself in the other person’s shoes” to imagine how that person is feeling. Empathy helps us to understand each other, learn from each other, and live with each other in our world.

The best global leaders use empathy to observe others, their feelings, and their needs. The best global leaders are not focused on the mirror and only looking at themselves, but use a window to observe and lead in the world. Think about how you can use empathy to be a good leader in your home, your school, your community, and your world.
Building a Miniature House

1. Which group did you belong to? How did it feel to be a part of this group?

2. Did anyone ask to borrow or offer to share any extra materials? What was the outcome?

3. What materials had the most impact on the ability of your group to build a stable and secure house?

4. Did you feel a sense of pride in the house you built? Why or why not?

5. Is it possible to judge the houses fairly since the resources were so different?

6. What surprised you the most when the pictures on the resource bags were revealed?

7. How is this activity similar to our global community?

8. Who, if anybody, is responsible to try and change this situation? Do you know people or organizations trying to make this situation better?
an enrichment program dedicated to creating the next generation of global leaders

“If our world is to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century we must harness the energy and creativity of all our citizens.” President Bill Clinton

What happened when you saw the Skittles scattered on the floor? Were you moved to action? Did your action convince a friend to act? How quickly were you able to conquer the challenge of the Skittles on the floor?

Perhaps, none of us alone can change the whole world, but what if you were a part of a movement of students changing the lives of families around the world? By knitting a KidKnits hat, you ARE part of a movement that is changing the lives of families around the world. YOU are changing lives right now. Take a look at the family pictures below. These are pictures of the families whose lives have been changed by KidKnits students, like you. 34 families in Rwanda and 16 families in Chile are being helped by you knitting your KidKnits hat. Now answer the reflection questions at the bottom of this page.

How does knowing my ball of yarn has changed the lives of so many families make me feel?

What is the most exciting thing about being part of the KidKnits movement?
My ‘Other’ Side of the World

Ellie didn’t start KidKnits because she wanted to change the entire world. She started KidKnits because she learned about ten women in Rwanda who made yarn. She learned about a need and then used knitting, something that she liked to do, and thought of a way she could help. What do you like to do? How could you use this thing to help other people?

Ellie met a women from Rwanda and learned that the other side of the world was not so far away. Ellie’s ‘Other Side of the World’ happened to be in Rwanda. Where is the ‘Other Side of the World’ for you? Where have you noticed a need for your leadership and service? How can you change your ‘Other Side of the World’ and become a global leader?
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notes, thoughts, pictures & ideas about how I can change the world...