Paper Doll Kindness  
A lesson about the consequences of our words and actions

Materials:
- Die-cut of paper doll, or paper doll template for each student.
- Example paper doll that looks like teacher
- Art supplies for kids to decorate dolls
- Enough pencils for all students (or have them bring their pencil to circle)
- Book or video clip about bullying (You are Special by Max Lacado)
- Tape, erasers, whiteout

Before lesson:
Earlier in the day or week we read or watch a video about being kind, or not bullying. This is the springboard for the discussion.

Activities:
1. Hand out a paper doll to each student and tell him or her to decorate it so it looks like him or her.
2. Give students 20 minutes or so to work on their dolls.
3. After everyone is finished come back together in the meeting area with our paper dolls.
4. Tell the students that today/this week we have been talking about being kind to each other. You can reference the movie/book that you watched earlier. Here is the script for doing the activity:

**Teacher:** Now we are going to do an activity that gives us a little picture of what it feels like when someone is unkind, some of you already know what it feels like, but some of you might be the one that has been unkind in the past. You all have worked really hard on your paper-selves and they look great. We are going to take a moment and look at each other’s. So go ahead and pass it to the person next to you.

*Pass dolls to the next person a few times. Then STOP the class.*

**Teacher:** This next part is going to be really hard, but I need you to remain mature and not get silly. When someone calls another student a mean or nasty name it is like this: *rip the doll a little bit.* I want each of you to rip the doll you are holding a little bit. This is like calling a mean or nasty name. It hurts the person and makes a tear.

*Pass the dolls again a few times. STOP the class. Now crumple the doll a little bit.*

**Teacher:** This is like leaving someone out who is different than you or isn’t “cool”. When that happens to someone it makes them crumple up inside, just like your doll.
Show the kids, let them do it, then pass again. STOP. Make a small tear somewhere else on the doll.

**Teacher:** This is like teasing someone or making fun of how they look.

Pass the dolls again. STOP and pass out a pencil to each student. Make a mark somewhere on the doll with the pencil.

**Teacher:** This is like saying nasty or mean things about someone behind their backs.

Pass, STOP. Make another mark on the doll.

**Teacher:** This is like listening to a friend saying something mean and not doing anything about it. You may not have said the mean thing, but you didn’t stand up for the person either.

5. **Discuss.** By this time the doll is in pretty sorry shape, have the kids continue to pass and stop when they get their own doll back. Now we have a conversation about how much time and effort they put into their doll, and how they feel now. This is a great time for kids to reflect on how this is like being unkind.

6. **Extend.** Now, I pass out tape and erasers and tell the kids to "fix" their dolls to try to make them look as good as they were before. After a few minutes, of course it is clear that they can't. We continue the conversation about how our words are powerful and we can't take them back, they will always leave marks and scars.

7. **Reflect.** After this activity have the students take their dolls back to their seats and glue/tape them into their writer's notebooks or on to a piece of paper. Tell students that writers reflect on their experiences and today we are going to reflect on this activity and our own experience. Give them the following prompts:

   a. Reflect on this activity, what we did, what we said and how it made you feel. What did you learn?
   b. Reflect on a time that someone was unkind to you, how is it like the activity that we did today? (Remember not to use names, say "a boy" or "a girl")
   c. Reflect on a time that you were unkind to someone else. Maybe you feel badly about it now and you want to write that person a letter to apologize, or maybe you just want to write about what happened. (Remember not to use names, say "Dear Friend", or "a boy" or "a girl"

**Closing**
You will definitely want to close this lesson by giving students the opportunity to make an action plan. Together on the whiteboard or chart paper write a “Kindness Contract” as a class.

**Example:**

We, the fourth graders in Miss O’s class, promise to try our best to be kind to each other. This means, that we will try to encourage each other, give compliments, and help each other when are having trouble. This means that we will not call each other names, say mean things about each other or leave each other out. When we see someone being left out, we will invite them to play. When we hear someone being unkind, we will remind them nicely to use kind words. When we say something unkind, because we will all make mistakes, we will apologize and take responsibility for our words and actions. When we know someone is being bullied we will be a friend and talk to the teacher. This is our kindness contract.