

## Earth Day 2026

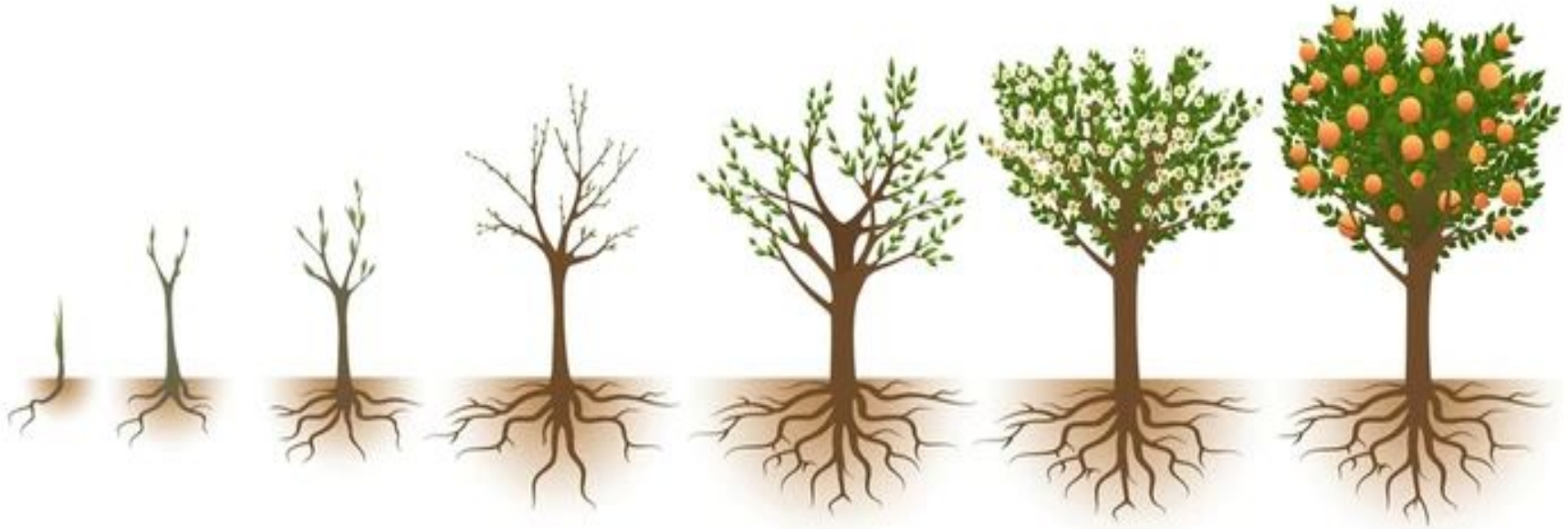
The theme: "*Earth for Us and Our Descendants:  
Preserving Humanity's Mental Health for Sustainable  
Development*"

**Our activity: Sowing the Seeds of Beauty**



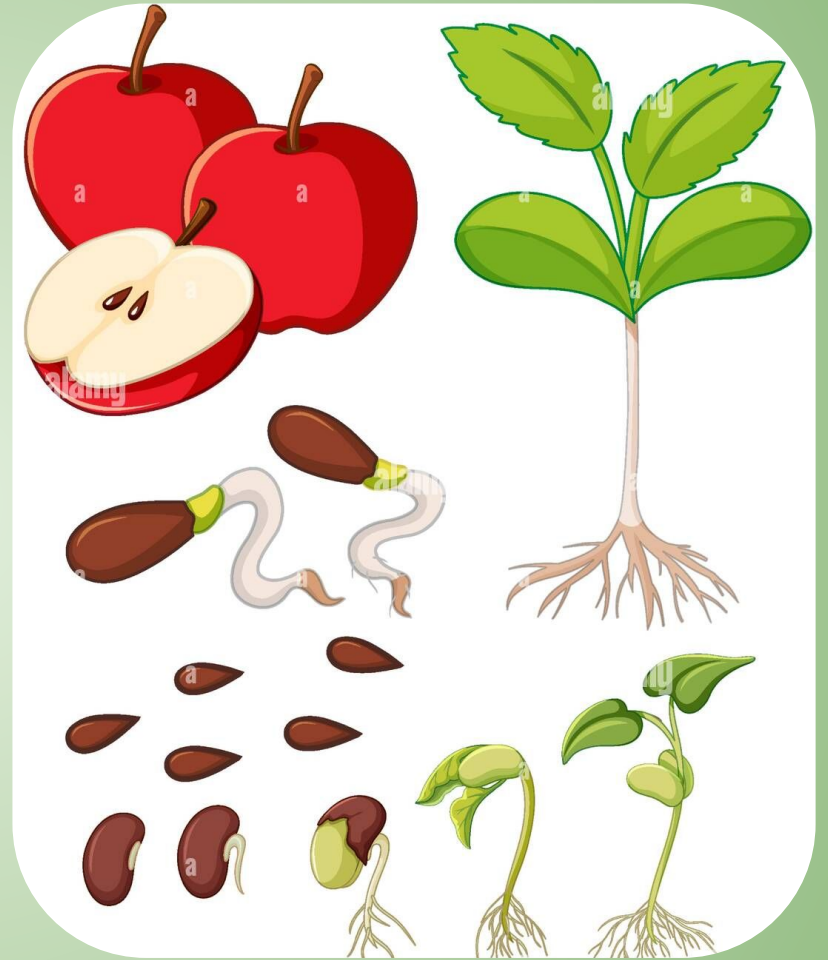
# Sowing the Seeds of Beauty

Instructions for completing the activity



## Our Earth Day Metaphor: The Apple

Apples symbolize life, fertility, health, youth, wisdom, and abundance. In many cultures and religions, they are also associated with temptation, knowledge (the forbidden fruit), and integrity. In Ukrainian folklore, they are a symbol of procreation, love, and joy, and are often an element of wedding ceremonies.



## The Story of Johnny Appleseed



**Johnny Appleseed was born as John  
Chapman in Leominster, Massachusetts, USA  
in the year 1774**



**In 1792, when he was 18 years old, John left home and began traveling west through the United States**



**At some point on his journey, John began carrying a bag which he filled with apple seeds that were being discarded by local cider mills**



**Sprout**

**As he traveled around the countryside, Johnny planted apple seeds wherever he went, dreaming that someday the seeds would produce enough apples so that no one ever went hungry again.**



**People often said that Johnny Appleseed dressed funny but this was because he would trade apple trees for people's old clothing, and give his good clothes to people who needed it more than him.**



**His actions provided families who were settling new lands a source of apples to eat, firewood, and cider to drink when the water was unsafe**



**Johnny Appleseed was known to walk without wearing shoes, so that he felt more connection to the Earth**

**Johnny Appleseed felt a need to care for others, without expecting anything in return**



**Johnny Appleseed's actions represent selflessness, hope, and a love for humanity that have inspired generations of goodwill and kindness.**

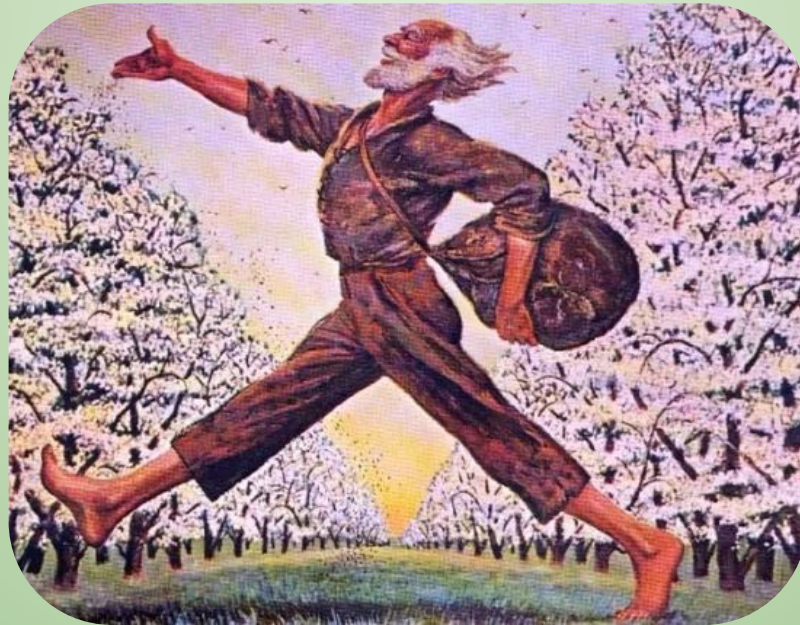


**Earth Day 2026: Sowing the Seeds of Beauty**  
Instructions for Children ages 7-13



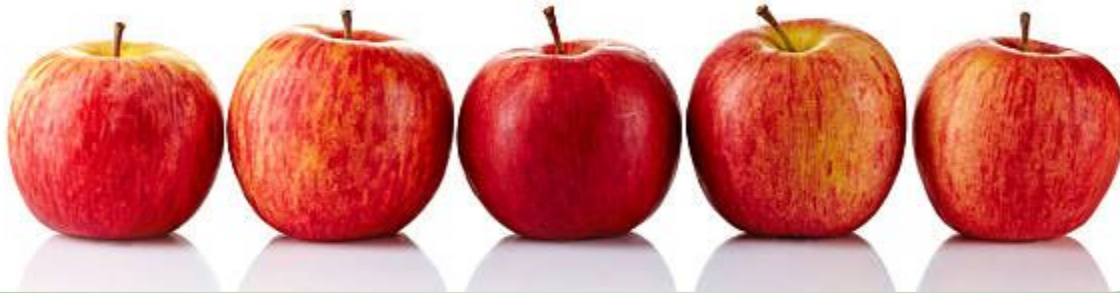
## Johnny Appleseed's "Did You Know?"

- Apples make me happy, and inspire me to want to share happiness with other people
- Apples are delicious!
- Apple blossoms are beautiful flowers that smell lovely!
- Apple trees are strong, fun to climb, and a good source of shade
- Apples are amazing! Unlike all other fruits, they can last in storage for over A YEAR, if you care for them - even through long, hard winters



## **Here's an example of what you can do with apples, and their seeds**

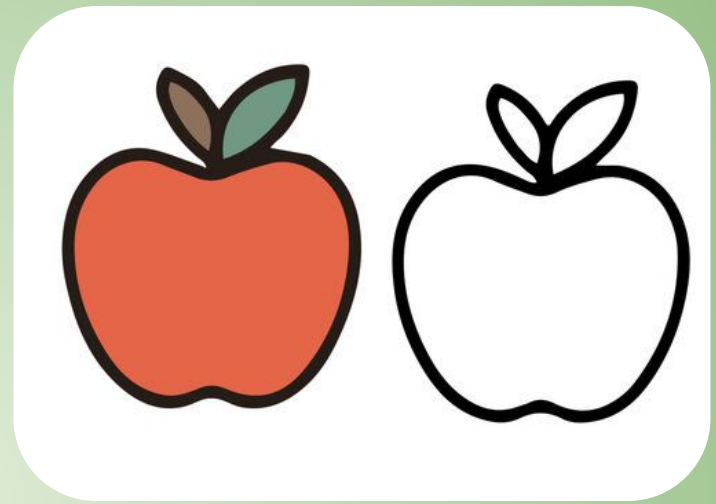
While following along, notice how this activity makes you feel...and how sharing the experience with others make *each* of you feel



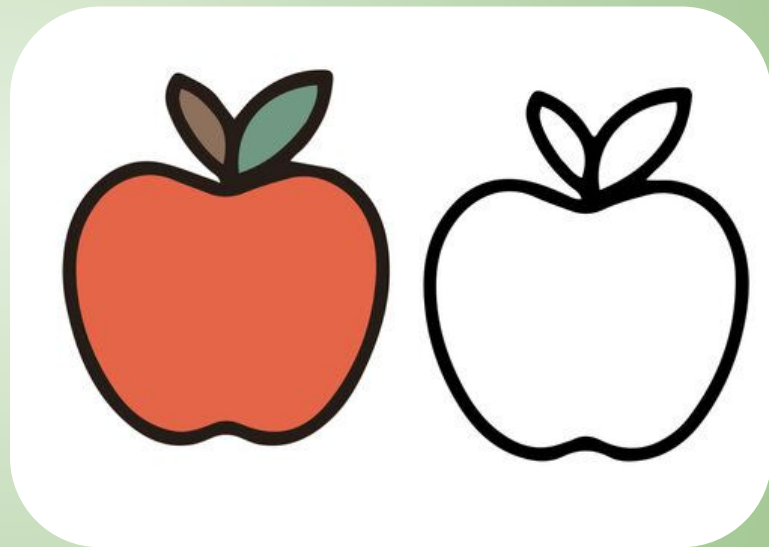
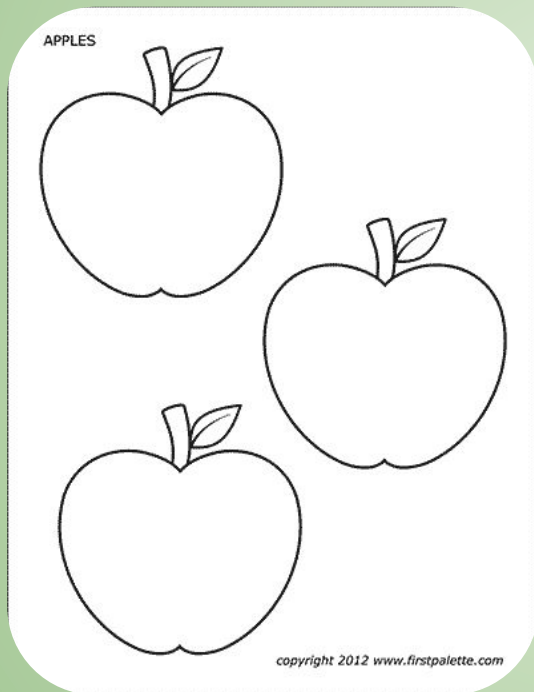
## Step 1: Make apple shapes

- On a piece of paper, either
  - Draw an apple
  - Cut out an apple shape from the template\*
  - Make an “apple stamp”\*

\*see the next two slides for more information



# Apple Cut Out Templates



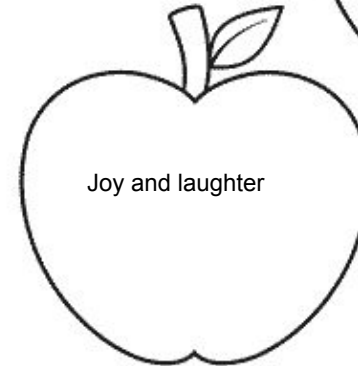
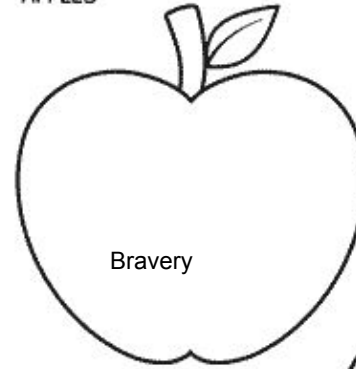
# How to Make Apple Stamps



## Step 2: Collect a Seed of Beauty

- Whenever you observe something beautiful, or you witness someone doing something kind (for other people, animals, or the planet), write down what you felt, or why you thought the action was important, in the apple
  - We have provided some examples for you in the image to the right

APPLES



### Step 3: Share the Beauty

- If you can give the apple to the person who did the good thing, do so



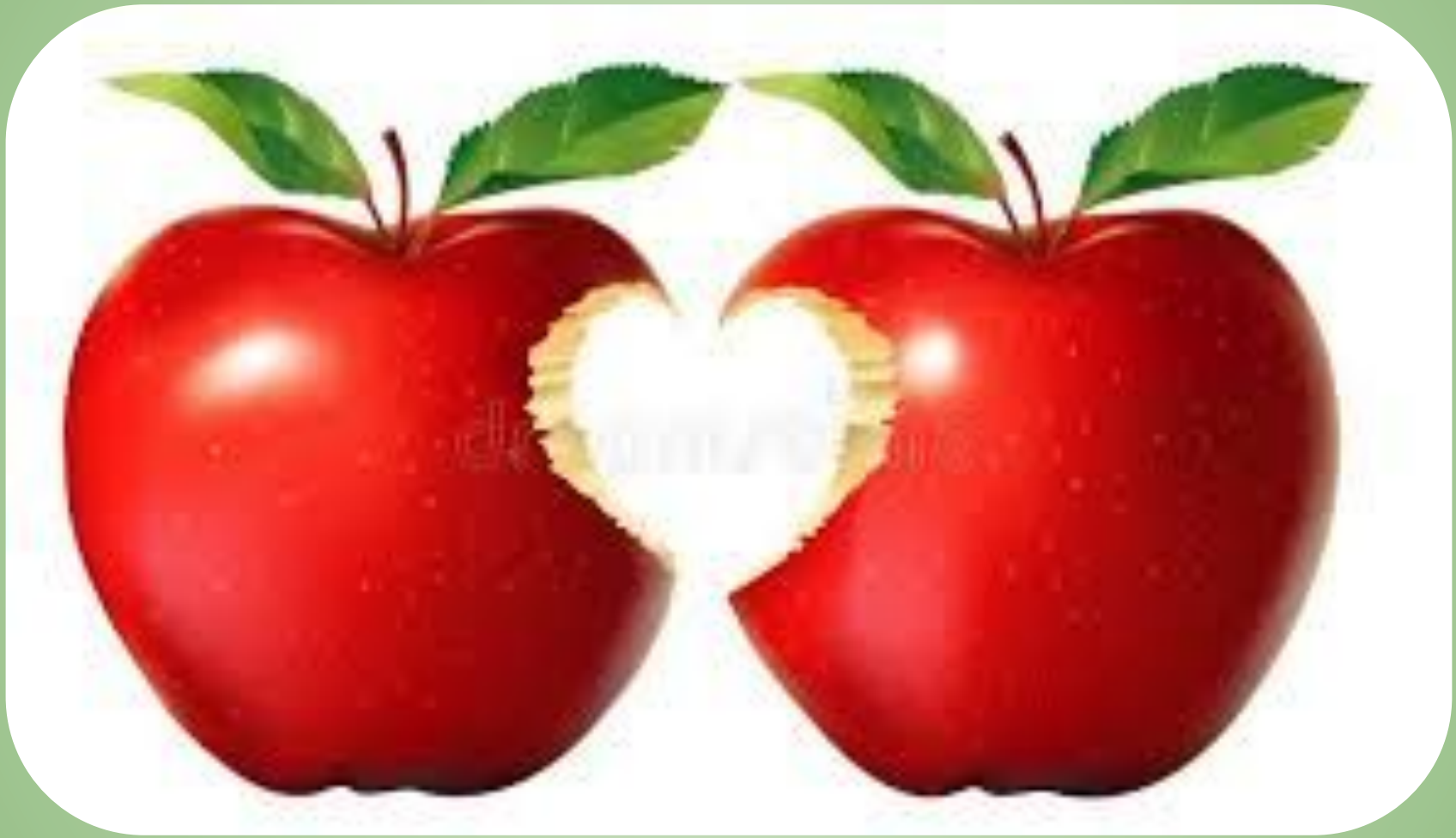
## Step 4: Create a Legacy Orchard

- Work with your friends, family, and teachers to collect as many apples as you can, and display them somewhere that could use beautiful art.



**Become Part of a Worldwide Network! Share Your Pictures and Stories here:**  
<https://forms.gle/WqeNgHW538Pk48V36>





# Earth Day 2026: Sowing the Seeds of Beauty

## Instructions for Ages 14-25



## Planting Seeds: A Symbol of Faith and Hope

- Earth Day celebrates the arrival of spring
- Farmers plant seeds in the spring with faith and hope for what will grow in the future



## Planting Seeds: A Symbol of Faith and Hope

- We plant many seeds because we know that not every single one grows to maturity. Even if the seed doesn't grow, planting it supports its ecosystem.
- The act of planting the seed is an act of gratitude and giving back.



**Like Johnny Appleseed, we can intentionally “plant seeds” of hope and goodwill for the year, with the goal that our efforts will give something to other people**

Here is how...



## Step 1: Consider the Whole Apple Plant

Apples come from flowers, but not every flower gives an apple, Despite this, each phase of the plant's life is interconnected to all of the others.

The apple fruit is the ultimate manifestation of a farmer's caring and good work...and each apple contains the seeds of future good works



## Step 2: Expand the Metaphor

While every part of the plant plays an interconnected role, the **seeds**, **flowers**, and **fruits** of the apple tree each carry their own powerful metaphoric meanings. Let's consider each of them...



**Apple seeds represent actions people take that generate a sense of being connected to the earth or to other people.**

What are some things you have done, or that you've witnessed other people do, that generate a sense of connection?



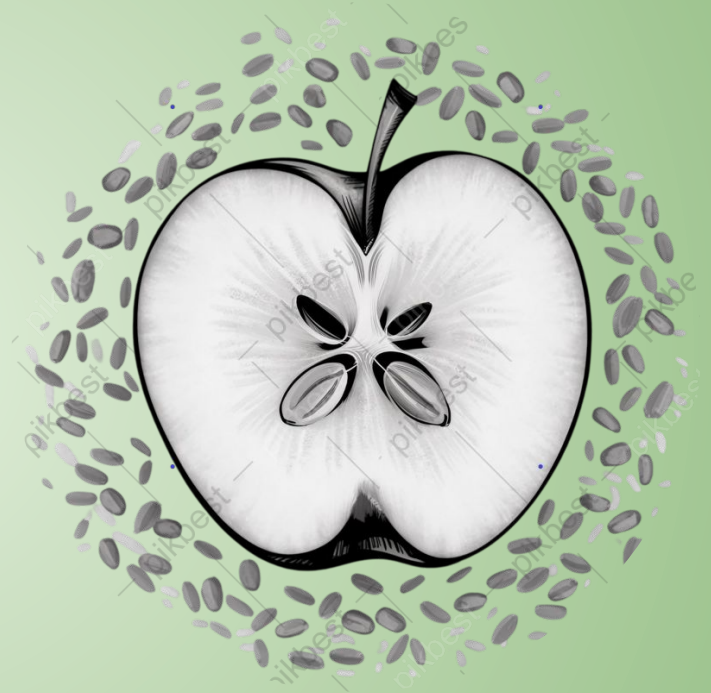
**Apple blossom flowers represent yourself and your emotional reactions to witnessing beauty.**

What do you find beautiful in nature? In other people? What does witnessing beauty make you feel or think?



**The Apple Fruit**  
**Represents noticing beauty in others**

What have other people done that inspire a sense of awe, appreciation, or gratitude in you?



## Step 3: Create Your Map of Beauty and Kindness

Get a blank piece of paper and any art materials you want to use.

Consider all of the “seeds”, “fruit”, and “flowers” you’ve identified. Use the whole paper to make a visual representation of beauty and kindness. It can look like an apple tree or it can be a more abstract creation.

Add all the details you feel inspired to do, beyond what we’ve instructed here



## Step 4: Create a Legacy Orchard

Consider who you can share your map of beauty and kindness with.

Who would understand?

Who would be excited by it?

Who inspires you to be creative, kind, or feel connected (to other people and/or nature)?



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