

# Memorial Day Activities for Preschoolers

## Activity 1: Poppy Process Art Collage

**Skills:** fine motor, creativity, gentle remembrance

**Time:** 10–20 minutes

### Materials

- Red tissue paper squares (or red construction paper scraps)
- Glue sticks (or liquid glue + brushes)
- White or light-colored paper
- Green paper strips (stems) or green marker
- Black circle stickers / marker for the center
- Smocks + table cover (optional)

### Setup (2–3 minutes)

1. Pre-cut red tissue into small squares (about 1–2 inches).
2. Place glue sticks and tissue squares in small bowls/trays.
3. Put one paper on each child's workspace.

### Directions

1. **Introduce the symbol (one sentence):**  
“Poppies are a flower that many people use as a symbol to remember and honor



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others.”

2. **Model quickly:**

Crumple one tissue square into a loose ball and press it onto glue.

3. **Children create poppies:**

- Spread glue in a circle shape on the paper.
- Add crumpled red tissue balls to make the flower.
- Add a black dot/circle in the middle (sticker or marker).

4. **Add stems/leaves:**

Glue a green strip or draw a stem and leaves.

5. **Close with respectful language:**

“We made poppies to practice remembrance and respect.”

### Helpful prompts

- “What happens when you crumple the paper?”
- “Is your flower big or small?”
- “How can we show respect today?”

### Extension (optional)

- Make a class bulletin board: “**Poppies for Peace**”
- Add dictated child quotes: “Respect means...” “Kindness looks like...”

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## Activity 2: Gratitude Circle + Thank-You Notes



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**Skills:** SEL, language, gratitude, writing/dictation

**Time:** 15–25 minutes

## Materials

- Chart paper + marker
- Folded cards (construction paper folded in half)
- Crayons/markers + stickers
- Optional: envelopes

## Setup (2 minutes)

1. On chart paper write: **“People Who Help Our Community”**
2. Prepare 1 card per child.

## Directions

1. **Start with a circle talk (3–5 minutes):**  
Ask: “Who helps keep people safe and helps our community?”  
Accept all answers (teachers, families, firefighters, doctors, crossing guards, soldiers, etc.).
2. **Make the class list:**  
Write/draw simple icons next to suggestions so all children can understand.
3. **Choose who the card is for:**  
Give children a choice:
  - “Make your card for a family member”
  - “Make your card for a community helper”
  - “Make your card for someone who takes care of you”



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4. **Create thank-you cards (8–12 minutes):**

- Children draw a picture on the front.
- Add stickers or a border.
- Adults write the child’s dictated message inside.

5. **Dictation sentence starters (pick 1):**

- “Thank you for helping \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “I appreciate you because \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “You make me feel \_\_\_\_\_.”
- “You help our community by \_\_\_\_\_.”

6. **Deliver or send home:**

If possible, deliver cards to staff in your building or send home.

### Helpful prompts

- “What kind thing did someone do for you?”
- “How did that help you feel?”
- “What is one kind thing we can do today?”

### Extension (optional)

- Create a class book: “**Thank You, Helpers!**” with one page per child.

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## Activity 3: Peace Pinwheels + “Quiet Moment” Routine



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**Skills:** fine motor, breathing/self-regulation, calm celebration

**Time:** 15–30 minutes

## Materials

- Pinwheel template (paper squares work too)
- Crayons/markers
- Scissors (adult use for cutting)
- Brad fasteners (adult use)
- Straws/sticks
- Optional: fan (indoors) or outdoor breeze time

## Setup (3–5 minutes)

1. Pre-cut pinwheel squares if possible.
2. Pre-punch holes (helps preschoolers).
3. Set out coloring materials.

## Directions

1. **Introduce theme:**  
“Peace means using kind choices and helping others feel safe.”
2. **Decorate pinwheels:**  
Encourage calming patterns: dots, waves, stripes, hearts, stars.
3. **Adult assembly:**  
Adults cut the corners and attach with brad to straw/stick.
4. **Try the pinwheels (outside or near a fan):**  
Let children watch them spin.



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5. **Teach a 30-second quiet moment routine:**

- “Hands on heart.”
- “Smell the flower” (inhale)
- “Blow the candle” (exhale)  
Repeat 3 times while watching the pinwheel spin.

6. **Close with action:**

Ask: “What is one peaceful choice we can make today?”

Examples: gentle hands, kind words, taking turns.

## Helpful prompts

- “What pattern did you choose?”
- “What helps your body feel calm?”
- “How can we be peaceful friends?”

## Extension (optional)

- Make a class pledge poster: “**Peaceful Choices**” with 3 rules:
  1. Kind words
  2. Gentle hands
  3. Helping friends



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