Human Knots

Line of inquiry
How can we communicate and solve a problem when we are restricted in movement or not able to talk?

Grade range: K-3
Group size: Three or four groups of 4-6 students
Materials: Just space and time
Activity Objective: Challenge students to solve a puzzle involving their fellow students
Time: 30 minutes
Skills: Critical thinking skills, communication, cooperation
Space: A classroom, with desks pushed back, a gym, or the playground.
Directions: Each group will choose a problem-solver. All of the problem-solvers will leave the room. In each group, the students will hold hands and then twist in and out, under and over to create a human knot. The problem-solvers will come back in and try to “un-tie” their group, they cannot speak and the students’ hands must stay locked.
Extensions: This can be done several times, giving different students the chance to be the problem-solver.
Reflection: how can we become better communicators using something other than our voices? How does the Golden Rule guide us when problem-solving with a group?
Notes: This is a great activity to get students moving, yet keeping them quiet.

Core Standards – Social Studies:
Thematic Strand: Culture Objective2, Indicator b: “Students will recognize and describe the contributions of different cultural groups.”