What Your Colleagues Are Saying . . .

This book is a gold mine for both longtime picture book lovers as well as those just beginning to build a classroom library! It is a comprehensive resource jam-packed with some of the best, most recent titles accompanied by learning strategies sure to make reading aloud a joyful experience for all. Her fresh ideas helped me see familiar, well-loved books in a new way as well as discover new titles to get the most out of a read aloud session! Her recommendations are thoughtful and purposefully chosen to engage, delight, and ignite a sense of wonder in even the most reluctant readers.

As you read, be sure to have your highlighter, sticky notes, and "books to read" list ready! I've already used many of these read aloud experiences with great success and know this will be an invaluable resource I will return to again and again to inspire readers! It is the perfect read aloud companion every teacher needs to invite students to read, think, and talk about books.

-Kristen Mullikin, First-Grade Reading Coach

Elk Grove, California

Maria Walther has become one of my most trusted resources for quality book recommendations for use in the classroom. Maria has a keen eye for identifying books that pair well together, matching books with effective lessons, and noticing details within books to enhance lesson plans. In this new book, Maria demonstrates how educators can squeeze every drop out of a read aloud experience, while providing an abundance of tips, resources, and ideas to maximize these sacred times in classrooms. Maria's book not only educates us on strategies for making the most of read aloud experiences; she also introduces us to a plethora of high-quality children's literature titles essential for classrooms.

—Dylan C. Teut, MEd, Executive Director, Plum Creek Children's Literacy Festival

If you were even the slightest bit trepid about selecting and reading picture books . . . this book will thoroughly erase that feeling, forever! Get ready to be "ramped up" so you can spark a fire and get your students to love diving into picture books! Dr. Maria Walther has done most of the work for you in this easy-to-read guide to just about everything picture book–related! All you have to do is implement, implement, implement, and then read, read, read!

-Rhonda Jenkins, Library Media Center Director

Kendall Elementary School, Naperville, Illinois

This book is filled to the brim with practical and inspirational advice about the importance of read-alouds! Maria offers every teacher a way into this vital literacy practice. Her energy and love of children and books—as well as her imagination and creativity and love of learning—are evident on every page. From why to how—Maria has it covered. She writes from a place of knowing with a voice that's authentic and powerful. And Maria's book choices are brilliant and fresh (which, of course, caused

me to buy way too many of her recommendations right away!). *The Ramped-Up Read Aloud* is an important book to energize your literacy classroom now and into the future.

-Ruth Culham, Author of Teach Writing Well: How to Assess Writing, Invigorate Instruction, and Rethink Revision

The Ramped-Up Read Aloud by Maria Walther is one of the most important books of our time! Read it and rededicate yourself to the importance of reading aloud to primary-grade children as well as to students in Grades 4 through 12. Reading aloud simultaneously nurtures positive relationships with students, builds community and vocabulary, and shows children how to think deeply about books. Equally important, read alouds expose children to beautiful, literary language, to visual literacy, and to stories that touch their hearts and feed their minds. Walther starts with 10 proven reasons for reading aloud, in case you or your principal doubts the learning power of this daily practice. Then, skillfully and passionately, Maria takes you through ways to develop successful read alouds, how to network to find new books, and how to use the ideas in this book to make the read aloud "a joyful celebration for all." If there's one book you read this year, put Walther's at the top of your list. It will change your life and your students' lives forever!

-Laura Robb, Author of Read, Talk, Write and Vocabulary Is Comprehension

In the *Ramped-Up Read Aloud*, Maria Walther writes, "I've selected the texts in this book to help you nurture an intellectually and emotionally healthy classroom." What a beautiful rationale for book selection and read aloud support! The book lists that so richly texture this resource are organized to facilitate teaching points and showcase lesson supports designed to elevate student engagement through teacher think aloud, comprehension conversations, vocabulary building, and open-ended questions. This one is a must-have!

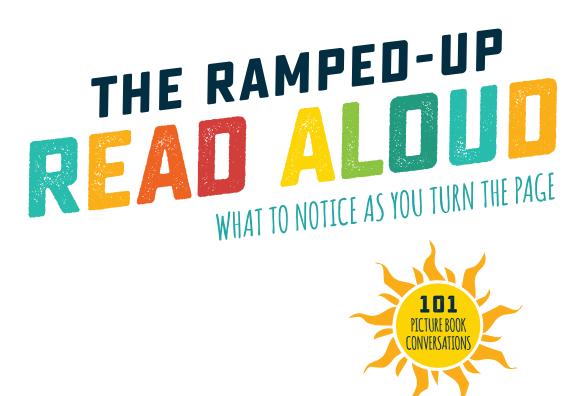
—Linda Hoyt, Author of Make It Real: Strategies for Success With Informational Texts

Dr. Walther breaks down the methods and science of reading picture books aloud without losing sight of the fact that, at some level, a good read-aloud experience is just plain magic. This book makes me want to read to kids.

-Tom Lichtenheld, Author/Illustrator



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MARIA WALTHER



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- Nadia Ji, who spent a year in my classroom and lived this book with me every school day. Your insightful comments and skilled noticing captured the small moves I make when reading aloud to first graders along with many of the beautiful photographs that grace the pages of this book.
- Katherine Phillips-Toms, my longtime teaching teammate, and the rest of the Tuesday Night Team. I'm so fortunate to work with teachers who are willing to reinvent the wheel, read new books, and stand up for what is best for kids.
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About the Author



Maria Walther is a first-grade teacher in Aurora, Illinois. She's been spending her days with children since 1986. Along with teaching young learners, Maria inspires other professionals by sharing her knowledge at local, state, and national conferences. The ideas she shares reflect her continued commitment to teaching, researching, writing, and collaborating with her colleagues. Maria earned a doctorate at Northern Illinois University in 1998 and was recently named The Outstanding Literacy Alumni by the Department of Literacy Education for professionalism, service, and career success. Maria has been a long-time advocate for reading aloud. She was honored as Illinois Reading Educator of the Year and earned the ICARE for Reading Award for fostering the love of reading in children. Before part-

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nering with the Corwin team, she coauthored five professional books and the *Next Step Guided Reading Assessment* with Scholastic. Learn more about her books at mariawalther .com and follow her on Twitter @mariapwalther.



Photo by Nadia Ji.

A read aloud should be a **joyful celebration for all**. For you, for your students, and indirectly, for the author and illustrator who toiled over each word and every image that lies on and between the covers of the book.

READ ALOUD = JOY!

I have to confess. I've had a career-long love affair with children's literature. Long before the dawn of Amazon and Twitter, I spent hours sitting on dusty bookstore floors turning pages. To discover the latest publications, I listened to experts at my local independent bookstore (Anderson's Bookshop in Naperville, Illinois), read professional journals, attended conferences, and researched my favorite authors. Slowly and thoughtfully, I added to my collection. After many years of teaching, I began writing professionally to help myself and teachers, like you, use the work of talented authors and illustrators to enhance literacy learning for students. All the while, I shared the books with my first graders—the most honest critics. As a result, my *library classroom*—where books fill every empty nook and cranny, surrounding the students with endless reading opportunities—is stocked with kid-appealing texts that illuminate just about any strategy, topic, or theme.

When you love books as much as I do, you're compelled to share them with anyone who will listen. Luckily, for me, I have a captive audience in my classroom every day. Over the years, I've observed the positive effects of read-aloud experiences on children's attitudes and achievement. In fact, the kids and I have kept

a read-aloud tally for the past ten years. See the results of one year of tallies in the photo to the right.

So, before you read another word in this book, I want to make sure that you clearly understand my stance on the read-aloud experience. First and foremost, a read aloud should be a **joyful celebration for all.** For you, for your students, and indirectly, for the author and illustrator who toiled over each word and every image that lies on and between the covers of the book. In my mind, a picture book is a piece of art created to be cherished and applauded. Right from the start, I give you permission to simply READ ALOUD—no questions, no stopping, no after-reading conversations. When your students are having a bad day—read aloud. If you need a break from a tough topic in math read aloud. When you just want to have fun with your kids—read aloud. Enjoy the book and the experience!

At the same time, I'm well aware of the demands of our overscheduled days. Certainly, it makes sense to take advantage of the instructional opportunities that a read aloud presents. In my classroom, I streamline instruction by intentionally selecting books to enhance student learning and expand their horizons beyond our classroom walls. Before reading that book, I consider student learning



(Text continues on page 5) Tally read-aloud experiences

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Read-Aloud Experiences at a Glance

Read-Aloud Experience Title -

To assist you in making strategic book selections, I've categorized the picture books by strategy and learning targets. This is reflected in the title of each read-aloud experience and also appears on the Learning Target Chart located on the companion website. I recognize that, like your students, picture books don't fit neatly into categories. Because books are nuanced and readers bring their unique backgrounds and perspectives to the text, each of the picture books that I've featured in Chapters 1-6 could easily fit into multiple categories. Use your professional judgment as you select experiences. I'm sure that once you begin reading, your learners will notice and bring up topics that you (or I) never considered.

Book Title: The 101 titles I've featured in this book are my most-recently-published selections based on over three decades of reading aloud and studying children's literature. That does not mean you will like them or that they will become your students' favorites. I give you permission to say to yourself, "Maria Walther likes this picture book, but my kids do not!" You can easily adapt the learning targets, questions, and extensions to accompany a different text that may better match your children's interests, their learning needs, and your learning targets.

About the Book: The description provides a brief synopsis of the book along with any additional information that might be helpful when deciding whether or not this particular title will fit your learners' needs and preferences.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

If you can't locate the featured book, look here to find my criteria for choosing this particular title and the characteristics I considered when searching for similar titles

Learning Targets: This section will help you zero in on what you are aiming for students to be able to know and do as a result of the experience.

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration: To save

you time, I've researched a bit about the illustrators' media of choice and guided you in previewing the book with your students. The preview might include noticing artistic and design techniques used on the cover illustration and if applicable, the back cover, a discussion of the title, and other ideas to build excitement and invite wonder.

Set a Purpose: The purpose statement, written in a

conversational manner, matches the learning targets and calls students' attention to what to notice and consider as you are reading aloud.

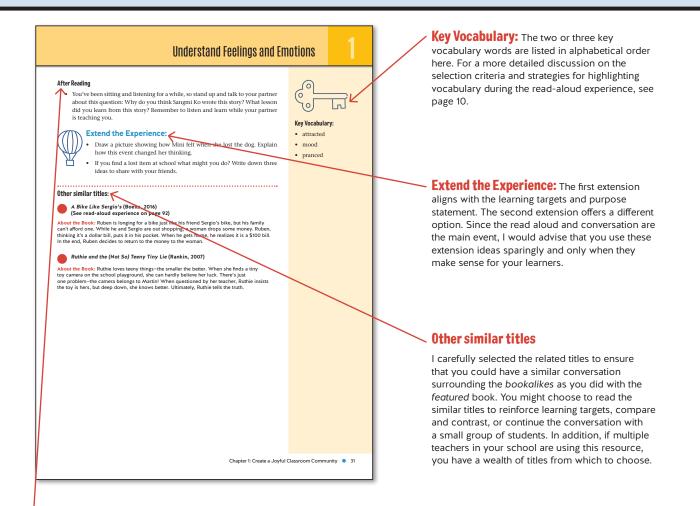
Infer Characters' Feelings Book Title: A Dog Wearing Shoes (Ko, 2015) About the Book: Young Mini finds a lost dog wearing little vellow shoes and despertely wants to keep him. One day, while playing at the park, he runs away from her. When she finds him at the animal shelter, she empathizes with his owner and works to reunite the two. After the happy reunion, Mini adopts her own dog from the animal shelter. To find a book like this one, look for the following Illustrations that clearly reflect the characters' feelings Characters who have to make a difficult decision Stories about returning lost items **Comprehension Conversation:** $(\bigcirc$ Before Reading 0 Notice the Cover Illustration: Learning Target: What colors do you see on the cover? This author/illustrator chose to draw all can use the full stations with a pencil and add these colors using the computer. I'm won-dring if yellow and red are going to be the only colors in this book. . . . Hmmm. illustrations and my schema to infer how a maracter is What does the back cover blurb say? Turn to a friend and make a prediction feelir based on the blurb. I can talk, write, or et a Purpose: Put a finger on your nose if you have a pet at home. Whether you have w about how the The or not, let's think about how it would feel if you lost your pet. Turn and tell a neighbor. Keep those feelings in your mind as we read A Dog Wearing Shoes because haracters felt in he story. hinking about your emotions can help you infer how the characters in the book re feeling During Reading [Without disrupting the flow of the story, pause, when appropriate, and invite students to use the illustrations and pose their own questions to help infer the characters varied emotions.] Mini's mom looked everywhere for the dog's owner. page: Why do you think Mini's nom says, "We'll have to take him home for now And then he started barking, page: What do you think Mini should do? Turn and ing. Can you infer from her body language how mom is feeling? What do you think Mini's mom wants her to do? low Mini knew. . . page: What happened to change Mini's mind? [If your students re familiar with the story Horrible Bear! (Dyckman, 2016; see read-aloud experice on page 32), you can compare and contrast the two stories.] 30 nped-Up Read Aloud **Bracketed Text**

To differentiate conversation you will have with your students from teaching tips, I've placed the teaching tips in brackets.

During Reading

Because most picture books do not have page numbers, I used the first few words at the top of page to point you toward specific pages. You will notice that for each book, I have only included a handful of questions at critical key points in the book. In my opinion, asking too many questions disrupts the flow of the story and distracts the listeners. It is better to let the author and illustrator magic do the job!

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After Reading

The concluding questions and conversation starters draw students' attention back to the learning targets and help them apply what they've learned from this book to their lives, their learning, or the own writing.

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Read Aloud = Joy! • 3

Ten Compelling Reasons to Read Aloud





Promotes reading

Fosters a strong sense of community



Celebrates the written (and illustrated) word



Builds a foundation for future learning



Expands vocabulary



Showcases a proficient reader's strategy use







Supports budding writers



Source: istock.com/yelet, istock.com/pijama61, istock.com/Bezvershenko, istock.com/primulakat, istock.com/sonicken, istock.com/TopVectors, istock.com/eliflamra, istock.com/sabelskaya, istock.com/Dar_ria, and istock.com/DmitryMo.

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targets. Then, as we read for enjoyment, I ask a few key questions (not 100!) that spark conversations and wondering. Through these authentic interactions, the targeted concepts and ideas bubble up. After reading, I may choose to extend the read-aloud experience by inviting the students to talk, write, draw, and/or explore the topic in a new way. The book you hold in your hands will guide you in having a similar experience with 101 different texts. On page 2, I've annotated a sample read-aloud experience with a brief explanation of each component.

In the pages that follow, I will outline the rationale that supports read aloud as a key instructional strategy. This is the section of the book to have handy when a parent or administrator questions your decision to spend instructional time on something he or she might view as *fun* or *extra*.

Ten Compelling Reasons to Read Aloud

As I work with colleagues across the country to strengthen our literacy instruction, I often hear teachers say, "I don't have time to read aloud" or "My administrator doesn't see the value of read-aloud experiences." In this section, I present 10 compelling reasons to carve out time to read aloud to your learners.

Promotes Reading

Passion and excitement are contagious. When you, as the teacher, are enthused about anything—whether it is the Cubs winning the World Series or the latest *Groovy Joe* book by Eric Litwin and Tom Lichtenheld—most children pick up on it. In fact, in 2016, when the Cubs pulled off their BIG win, my first graders witnessed my delight. The next day, a few kids who never really cared about sports, were wearing brand-new Cubs hats, Cubs shirts, and requesting to sing the "Go Cubs Go" song over and over again. Clearly, they were swept up in Cubs' fever.

I believe read aloud does for reading what the Cubs did for baseball in Chicago—ignite (or reignite) the passion. I've watched many a reluctant or vulnerable reader turn around

Vovember 3, 2016 Thursday (11-3-16) Good morning first graders! You are part of history today! This is the first time the ath Works Cubs have won the World MUSIC ECESS Series since 1908! eading Ruddies

Read aloud does for reading what the Cubs' win did for baseball in Chicago–ignite passion!

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Read Aloud = Joy! • 5

after I strategically selected read-aloud books that I knew that particular child would enjoy. Because read aloud is a low-stress learning event, we welcome children to *the reading club* and show them all the possibilities. Students in classrooms where teachers read aloud are more likely to pick up books on their own and check them out from the library. Certainly, it is essential that we teach children HOW to read, but I would argue it is a necessity to teach them to LOVE reading.

Here's How This Book Will Help You Promote Reading

If this book helps you to squeeze one more read aloud into your day or discover an author that your students have never met, you will, undoubtedly, be changing readers' lives. With more than 300 titles at your fingertips, you are sure to find the ideal book to spark your students' interest. When we read aloud, we not only promote books, but we also bring a diverse group of individuals together to form a community of caring learners.

Fosters a Strong Sense of Community

Community. Our support system when life takes a turn. A place where we feel safe and protected. Sadly, not every child enters our classroom with a strong sense of belonging. Some of our little learners come to us from homes and neighborhoods shattered by violence and tainted with struggles. When they walk into our classrooms, it may be the first place they've felt truly secure. A positive classroom environment begins with our day-to-day interactions with individual children. When we smile and greet children as they walk in the door, we put them at ease by making them feel welcome. Then, our instructional decisions communicate what we value. When we place interactive read aloud center stage, it conveys that we value books and conversations. Read-aloud experiences create bonds through shared emotional moments and by discussing texts that promote positive social interactions.



Read aloud fosters a strong sense of community.

The Ramped-Up Read Aloud

I believe a cohesive classroom is one of the natural by-products of the read-aloud experience. When kids are sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with tears in their eyes as Henry's family is sold away in *Henry's Freedom Box* (Levine, 2007) the shared sadness brings them together. On another day, sounds of laughter ring out as Penelope Rex, a little T. rex, can't stop eating the children in her class in *We Don't Eat Our Classmates* (Higgins, 2018). When a group of people laugh, cry, and wonder together their relationships grow stronger.

I've selected the texts in this book to help you nurture an intellectually and emotionally healthy classroom, an environment where students begin to understand that learning is challenging and that our brains grow when we take risks, think flexibly, ponder, and power through the hard parts. In addition, the books and conversations that surround them promote positive social decision making and develop children's social imagination. Social imagination is loosely defined as ability to read another's face to infer how he or she is feeling and to imagine another's actions, emotions, and beliefs from various perspectives. To learn more about developing social imagination, I highly recommend Peter Johnston's (2012) book *Opening Minds*. How do we highlight social decision making during a read-aloud experience? Johnston urges us to do this by "choosing books with emotional tensions and conflicts and inviting conversations about feelings, motives, and beliefs" (2012, p. 76). After these conversations, ask students, "How might you use what you've learned from this story in your own life?" I kept Johnston's wise words in mind as I selected books and crafted the conversations you find in this resource.

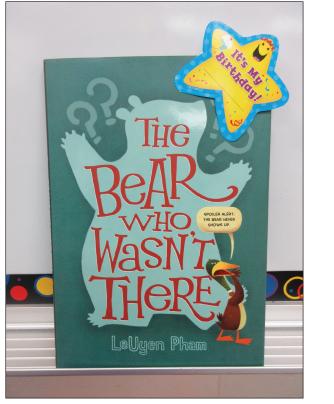
Here's How This Book Will Help You Foster a Strong Sense of Community

Chapter 1 is brimming with books and extension ideas to sample as you build relationships and community at the beginning of the year. Every moment you spend shaping your students' abilities to make appropriate choices and interact with others in a positive way will pay off throughout the year. This brings me to the next point, creating a classroom community that's brimming with joy and celebration!

Celebrates the Written (and Illustrated) Word

Think about the activities that make you happy. Surely, we focus more time and expend increased energy on preferred activities than on those we dread. Therefore, if we elevate the written word by enthusiastically celebrating all textrelated events, whether small or large, we can catch some of those readers who are vulnerable or disengaged. For example, in my classroom we not only celebrate the kids' birthdays, but we also applaud book birthdays. This is just one simple way to elevate the written word.

To draw readers into the joyful read-aloud experience you want to begin with books that are fun, humorous, and engaging. My go-to series to launch our read aloud is Mo Williems's Elephant and Piggie series. With a total of 25 books, you can't go wrong when you read any of these on the first days of school. You can also rely on many of the Elephant and Piggie books to launch conversations about friendship and other social skills. (See page 8 for a few ideas). In addition to Elephant and Piggie books, I look for unique and engaging picture books that will catch my listeners' attention.





Celebrate book birthdays!

Launch your read-aloud experiences with a book from this hilarious series.

A sampling of social skills highlighted in Elephant and Piggie books by Mo Willems		
Elephant and Piggie Book	Social Skill	
Can I Play Too? (Willems, 2010)	Friendship; Problem solving; Including others in play	
Happy Pig Day! (Willems, 2012)	Feeling left out; Accepting differences; Including everyone	
Listen to My Trumpet (Willems, 2012)	Using your social filter when sharing thoughts with friends; Being honest with friends	
My Friend Is Sad (Willems, 2007)	Inferring friends' feelings	
Should I Share My Ice Cream? (Willems, 2011)	Sharing and being generous with friends	

Making the author and illustrator come alive for your students is another way to honor the hard work and dedication that goes into writing and/or illustrating a picture book. It is so much easier today than it was when I first started teaching. Checking out authors' websites, connecting via social media, and attending virtual or live book events are just a few ways you and your students can meet and connect with authors. In her book, *More About the Authors* (2016), Lisa Cleaveland provides another rationale for making authors come alive for our students. Through intentional author and illustrator studies, Lisa shows her students the possibilities they have as writers and illustrators. She suggests we shift our mindset away from focusing on mentor texts and instead consider introducing

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writers to mentor authors. In her words, "What it boils down to is this: a mentor text gives you lessons; a mentor author gives you a relationship" (p. 17). When you welcome authors and illustrators into your classroom, you can motivate readers and inspire writers.

Here's How This Book Will Help You Celebrate the Written (and Illustrated) Word

On the companion website, I've include links to book trailers that entice students to read the books and authors' Twitter handles in case you want to connect via social media. In addition, I've intentionally selected authors and illustrators that would be strong mentors for your young writers. As you and your students get to know authors, you'll discover that most of them discuss the fact that they always were or have become readers. Many of the authors I've seen speak have shared how reading helped to build the foundation on which their books were built.

Builds a Foundation for Future Learning

Unfortunately, some our students come to us unlucky in literacy. In other words, they have not been raised by adults who are able, for one reason or another, to provide the literacy-rich environment that is essential for future success in schools. We know that "parents who frequently engage in shared reading experiences and frequently teach about alphabetic knowledge have children with the most reading success after a few years of elementary school" (Cunningham & Zibulsky, 2014, p. 129). Consequently, we need to fill in the gaps one read-aloud experience at a time. Book by book, we build a foundation for future learning as children accumulate a bank of familiar books, stories, songs, and poems from which to draw when reading, writing, thinking, and talking about texts.

When read aloud becomes a priority, you gain endless opportunities to forge connections among all the learning your children experience throughout their day, week, and year. Former U.K. Literacy Associate President, Henrietta Dombey, posits that read-aloud experiences provide children "with a shared frame of reference—a path for taking their understanding forward in company with each other" (as cited in Layne, 2015, p. 46). For example, while I was reading aloud the book *Poppleton in Winter* (Rylant, 2001), I paused to explain what a *bust* was (Poppleton was sculpting a bust of his neighbor Cherry Sue). To help students understand, I referred back to the time the children made snowman sculptures in art class. This seems like a simple statement, but it carries great weight in helping children begin to consider the interconnectedness of their learning experiences.



View the book trailers and the author and illustrator Twitter handles at resources.corwin.com/ rampedup-readaloud

Here's How This Book Will Help You Build a Foundation for Future Learning

To prepare students for future learning, I designed the questions in the read-aloud experiences to help learners listen, think, and talk with curiosity. Questions like the ones found in this book will support you in addressing the following *transactional* questions:

- What does this book say to me?
- How does it change who I am?
- How might it alter what I do in this world? (Beers & Probst, 2017, p. 22)

Future success in school and beyond depends on rich, connected learning experiences as well as a robust vocabulary.

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Book by book we build a foundation for future success.

Expands Vocabulary

If you've been teaching as long as I have, you may have noticed that your students' vocabulary knowledge is not as rich as it was in the past. Their bank of known words seems to be shrinking. In my opinion, it is because adults are not always taking the time to talk, discuss, and expand their children's vocabularies. In the grocery store, everyone is on their own electronic devices. So, children aren't hearing a conversation like the following that I use to have with my daughter in the grocery store, "Hey look! That's an apple. Apples grow on trees. People use apples to make the applesauce you like for breakfast. What colors of apples do you see?" and so on. As you'll see with the experiences in this book, you can have a similar kind of expanded-vocabulary conversation about the pictures, words, or ideas in a book.

Not only does read aloud open the floodgates of conversation, but it also helps all students, especially English Language Learners, expand their vocabulary and hear the nuances of the English language including intonation, pauses, rhythm, and pronunciation. I recently met two different Uber drivers who had taken that job specifically to improve their English. As a teacher, I was happy to help! They commented that unlike the textbooks they read or online programs they used, their passengers would explain the nuances of the English language. That is what read aloud–focused talk does for our students.

Here's How This Book Will Help You Expand Vocabulary

For most of the read-aloud experiences, I've selected three vocabulary words to highlight as you come upon them in the text.

Demonstration of an effective instructional sequence for teaching vocabulary

1. Read the text.	"Soon Mini's dog had attracted quite a crowd."
2. Review the story context for the word.	See on this page how all the people are crowded around the dog. The dog <i>attracted</i> a crowd.
3. Provide a kid-friendly definition of the word.	Attracted means when people or animals want to be near someone or something.
4. Have the children say the word.	Say the word attracted with me.
Provide examples of the word used in contexts different from the story context.	Bees are attracted to flowers.
Engage children in activities to get them to interact with the words.	Tell your partner something that you are <i>attracted</i> to. Say, "I'm <i>attracted</i> to,"

Source: Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2013, p. 62.

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Highlight three words as you read aloud.

When I was making decisions about which words to pick, I revisited the work of Isabel Beck, Margaret McKeown, and Linda Kucan (2002). These researchers suggest focusing on *Tier Two* words or those that "are likely to appear frequently in a wide variety of texts and in the written and oral language of mature language users" (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan, 2002, p. 16). Children learn *Tier Two* words through interactions with books. To determine whether the word I was selecting was a *Tier Two* word, I used their tip that children should

be able to explain a *Tier Two* word using basic, familiar words they already know. Those basic words are *Tier One* words or words found in oral language that don't usually require direct teaching.

Building a word base requires both direct teaching and plenty of reading on the part of the children. Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2013) offer an effective instructional sequence when teaching meaningful vocabulary to our young readers. In the chart on page 10, I demonstrate what this might sound like with the word *attracted* from the book *A Dog Wearing Shoes* (Ko, 2015).

In addition to assisting you as you expand your students' word knowledge, Chapters 3 and 4 highlight proficient reader strategies, yet another compelling reason that read aloud is a key instructional component.

Showcases a Proficient Reader's Strategy Use

One good thing about being old, like me, is that I make a lot of mistakes while reading aloud. I'm not sure if it because my mind is elsewhere or if it is because my eyes are getting worse! I'm sure you, too, notice times when you've accidentally misread a word, line, or page in the book. Great news! You've got an instant lesson on metacognition. Stop and say, "Wait! That didn't make sense. I must have skipped a page. I need to go



Turn read-aloud miscues into teachable metacognitive moments.

Read Aloud = Jov!

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back and reread. That's what readers do." In other words, when you catch yourself in the act of making a miscue or a situation where meaning is breaking down, turn it into a teachable moment.

Read aloud is the ideal venue to consistently showcase and reflect on the strategies proficient readers use. In this resource, you'll find conversations and extensions that target these strategies:

- Make meaningful connections
- Predict
- Ask questions
- Visualize
- Infer
- Determine Importance

If you make strategic reading and thinking about your thinking the norm, students will rise to the occasion. I've noticed that my learners are more engaged in the read alouds when they are challenged to process the text at a deeper level (or at least *attempt* to process it). The expectation that everyone can listen and dig into the text to try to elevate their understanding is communicated through the questions I ask and interactions I encourage the children to have with each other.

Here's How This Book Will Help You Showcase a Proficient Reader's Strategy Use

As you peruse the read-aloud experiences in this book, you will see that I've carefully crafted questions and metacognitive moments that will lead your students to better understand the complex thinking that goes on as we read. These moments occur in the *Before*, *During*, and *After* read sections of each experience. Along with growing thoughtful readers, the experiences in this book will introduce your young authors to mentor authors and illustrators.

Supports Budding Writers

Writing is a thinking and decision-making process. When you unpack the inner workings of a book for students by highlighting the decisions authors and illustrators make, you bring this thinking to light. As children listen to all the verbs Angela DiTerlizzi (2016) uses in *Some Pets* or pore over Tom Lichtenheld's (2011) visual details in *E-mergency*, they absorb some of these artists' brilliance. Soon you'll see shades of the published author's and illustrator's techniques appear in their writing. A speech bubble here, a visual joke there, and students begin crafting texts with their readers in mind. Ralph Fletcher sums this process up perfectly.

The writing in a classroom can only be as good as the literature that supports and surrounds and buoys it up. Reading aloud is an essential way to build vision in your students for what strong writing looks like, sounds like, and feels like. (2017, p. 76)

I'm sure you've already discovered the power of mentor texts for helping young writers envision the possibilities. The books in Chapter 6 will help you continue the journey with your students.

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Here's How This Book Will Help You Support Budding Writers

Fletcher (2017) suggests the following steps when using mentor texts for writers:

- Read aloud
- Invite collaborative conversations
- Notice and admire the piece
- Point out one craft technique
- · Link published work to student writing

To save you time, I kept Ralph Fletcher's steps in mind as I crafted the read-aloud experiences in Chapter 6. Although I selected the books in Chapter 6 for writing-focused conversations, keep in mind that you can read and discuss any book in this resource with a writer's eye. The conversation is key. That is why I also carefully considered how to best assist you in facilitating collaborative conversations.



Budding writers use what they've learned from mentors authors and texts.

Sparks Collaborative Conversations

Before we begin talking about collaborative conversations and questioning, it is important to reiterate loudly and clearly that there are many times I read aloud just for FUN! I don't stop to ask questions because it would interrupt the action in the story. Now that we have that out of the way, I'll begin with my definition of a collaborative conversation. In our book, Katherine Phillips and I (2012) defined a comprehension conversation as "an interactive discussion about a piece of text that is best sparked by posing higher-level questions and inviting students to listen to and respond to their peers' thoughts and ideas" (p. 21). To support you facilitating collaborative conversations, I'll break that definition into two parts. First, let's look at some effective questioning techniques (see page 14). Then, I'll share ways to help children listen to and respond to their peers (also on page 14).

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Effective questioning techniques

- Notice and name the strategies and conversational norms students are displaying
 - I noticed you used clues to make that prediction. That's what readers do.
 - I heard you ask your partner, "Why do you think that?" That's how you both get even smarter.
 - You've got a lot of questions about this book! Asking questions helps you better understand the meaning.
- Ask open-ended thinking questions
 - What do you notice?
 - What do you think about that?
 - What do you predict might happen next? What clues support your prediction?
 - How do you infer the character is feeling right now? What clues helped you make that inference?
- Respond to answers with nonjudgmental comments
 - Hmmm! I didn't notice that!
 - Thank you for sharing your thinking with us today!
 - You just made a prediction-that's what readers do!
- Scaffold students who are having difficulty articulating their thinking
 - Tell me more about that.
 - o If you thought you knew the answer, what would it be?
- Alert students to important events in the text.
 - Pay close attention-here's the BIG ending!

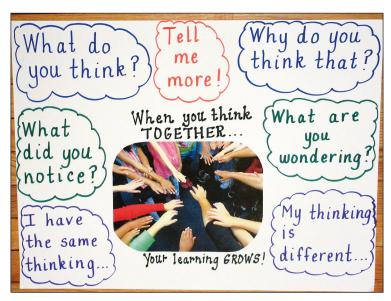
Tips for facilitating collaborative conversations

- Set expectations for kids' comments. For example, in my classroom the listeners know not to raise their hand when we're nearing *the big ending* of the book.
- Don't spoil an engaging read aloud by asking too many questions.
- If the read aloud warrants a lot of collaborative discussion, read it in two or three settings.
- Pay attention to your students' level of engagement.
- Provide ample opportunity for students to have peer-to-peer conversations.
- Post the language of a collaborative conversation somewhere near your readaloud area

You may have noticed a common theme running through both charts: the focus on the *students*. As much as possible, I try to take myself out of the conversation equation by making sure students know that I am not the keeper of knowledge and that *their* thoughts and ideas are valued.

Here's How This Book Will Help Spark Collaborative Conversations

I've embedded the questioning techniques and the language to facilitate collaborative conversations in the read-aloud experience. The conversations you will have about books will not only strengthen your students' literacy learning, but it will also prompt children to consider characteristics like perspective-taking and empathy that caring citizens exhibit.



Collaborative conversations provide ample opportunities for students to have peer-to-peer discussions.

Encourages Perspective-Taking and Empathy

Cunningham and Zibulsky (2014) discuss the following reasons that fictional books offer optimal opportunities to develop perspective-taking and empathy by discussing characters' emotions, actions, and thoughts:

- Include some issue or conflict to be resolved
- Showcase interpersonal problems between two or more characters (whether they are people, animals, or aliens!)
- Contain emotion-focused statements

By conversing about the internal state of characters, we help children develop what Peter Johnston (2012) refers to as a social imagination or the "ability to make sense of social cues and to think through their implications" (p. 72). Children with stronger social imaginations are viewed favorably by peers and exhibit the following:

- Increased comprehension of narrative text
- Positive social skills
- Better social cooperation
- Larger social networks

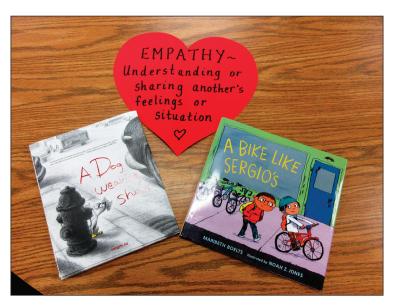
- Stronger moral development
- Enhanced self-regulation
- · Fewer angry responses during personal interactions
- Less misbehavior at home and school

(List paraphrased from personal notes taken during a presentation by Peter Johnston at the International Literacy Association Conference held on July 17, 2017.)

When we consider the characteristics of children with strong social imaginations, it is a gentle reminder of how important it is to intentionally cultivate this skill through read aloud. If all of our students displayed those traits, our classrooms (and our world) would be a much happier place. Isn't this what we want for our students?

Here's How This Book Will Help You Encourage Perspective-Taking and Empathy

At every turn, you will find questions that contain mental verbs (*imagine, feel, believe, wonder,* and so forth) as Peter Johnston (2012, p. 76) suggests, reminding you to focus on the thoughts and actions of the author and illustrator, the characters in the book, and your students. When you open these discussions and respond without judgment, you will begin to see the benefits. Moreover, you will notice that when this type of language is the norm during read-aloud experiences, it will seep into your other classroom conversations and eventually become the way you and your students converse all day long.



Books offer opportunities for students to develop empathy.

Opens Window to Other Worlds

Books have the power to transport readers to unfamiliar new locations, to immerse them in new cultures, and to turn back the clock in order to experience and learn from historical events. Therefore, we intentionally select read-aloud texts that will stretch our readers as they become familiar with a world outside their own. As we read and

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converse, we scaffold learners' beginning realizations that "the world is best if we all learn to respect, appreciate, and honor our mutual humanity—and strive to understand the different ways in which people and societies think and live" (Yokota & Teale, 2017, p. 633). As you add to your classroom library collection, search for stories peopled with diverse characters and settings that offer your students a glimpse into another world. Because, after all, "it's through a rich, technicolored collection of print and nonprint media that reflect the values and strengths of *every* culture that we learn about and come to understand provinces beyond our own" (Culham, 2016, p. 5).

Here's How This Book Will Help You Open Windows to Other Worlds

Throughout this professional book, I've made deliberate text choices that will help you to *begin* to introduce your students to new locations, cultures, and historical events. Whether it be riding on a bus with CJ and his grandma to *The Last Stop on Market Street* (de la Peña, 2015) or designing buildings alongside Zaha Hadid (Winter, 2017), it is my hope that the picture books found in this resource will lead you to many other *technicolored* texts and media to share with your learners.



Books open windows into the past.

Six Secrets to Successful Read-Aloud Experiences

Do you want to know my secrets? Here I will share everything I've learned so far from my three decades of sharing books with kids. Of course, there is always more to learn, and I can always count on my students to teach me what I need to think about next!

Secret #1: Strategic Book Selection

You might be wondering what I look for when I'm searching for books. First and foremost, I think about the children in my class during that particular year. As I'm sure you've noticed, just as every individual in your class is unique, every class, as a whole, has a distinct personality. Certain books are popular while others fall flat. From there I look carefully at the book and consider the criteria highlighted in the box on page 18. In the pages that follow, I will share the thinking behind my strategic book selections. I will talk to you a little bit about each criteria and share a few book titles that illuminate that particular aspect of children's literature.

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Criteria to consider when selecting books

- Engaging, Diverse Characters
- Rich Language
- Fascinating Illustrations
- Thought-Provoking Themes
- Kid-Appealing Content
- Original Premise
- Unique Perspective
- Horizon-Broadening Subjects

Engaging, Diverse Characters

I'm always searching for books with characters that my students can call friends. I want them to be able to relate to the characters' emotions or actions and think about how it would feel to walk in that person's (or animal's) shoes. This not only helps my students comprehend stories, but it also nudges them toward understanding and expressing their own feelings. Together, we study how authors reveal insights into a character and make an anchor chart listing the following ways:

- Narration
- Conversation
- Illustrations
- Thoughts of the character
- Thoughts of other characters
- Actions

Then, we notice and discuss examples during our interactive read alouds. We meet characters like *Janine* by Maryann Cocca-Leffler (2015) who is excluded from a party because she is different, but instead of being upset, she throws her own party and invites EVERYONE! We converse about how Janine reacted to the actions of her peers. Then, to gain more insights into the characters, we read the back flap and learn that Maryann wrote this book about her daughter, Janine, who has bravely navigated her life with disabilities.

In addition, I try to ensure that the books I read to my students are peopled with characters that look like and have similar life events as my students. Fortunately, in recent years, there has been a call-to-action for children's book publishers to include more diverse characters in their books. The *We Need Diverse Books* [™] organization or WNDB ® advocates for "essential changes in the publishing industry to produce and promote literature that reflects and honors the lives of all young people." As educators, it is our responsibility to do the same in our educational communities. Look at the shelves in your classroom library; do the books mirror the children you teach? Work with your school librarian to critically examine the collection and make necessary adjustments so that students have the opportunity to check out books to which they can relate.

Rich Language

When children are immersed in texts with rich language, they begin to use that language in their conversations and, eventually, in their writing. In her position statement, Linda Gambrell reminds us that "book language is a second language" (as cited in Layne, 2015, p. 44). An example of such a text is the book *One Word From Sophia* (Averbeck, 2015). In this story, Sophia desperately wants a pet giraffe and presents her arguments (along with pie charts and graphs) to her family. As she's trying to persuade her family, she uses words like *effusive*, *loquacious*, and *verbose*. Fortunately, the author has included a humorous, and informative, glossary at the end of the book leading to further discussion about the wonderful world of words.

Fascinating Illustrations

At the Judson University Literacy in Motion Conference in June, 2015, I had the pleasure of listening to children's author and illustrator Tom Lichtenheld speak about why he loves creating books for kids. One of his many reasons is that kids are innately

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skilled at understanding visual storytelling. So, when he's working on his illustrations, he carefully crafts them to create interest, draw the reader into the story, color a mood, add magic, or simply make kids (and adults) laugh. In the book he illustrated called *Stick and Stone* by Beth Ferry (2015), you can find examples of each of the abovementioned criteria to notice with your students and discuss how they might do the same in their own illustrations.

Thought-Provoking Themes

At the beginning of the year as we build our literacy community, I select texts that illuminate themes such as accepting differences, working together, or being kind. We discuss how the theme of a story quietly ties together the characters, setting, and plot and may reveal the author's purpose. Guiding students as they uncover the theme leads to a deeper understanding of the text. Kadir Nelson's (2015) book *If You Plant a Seed* is a perfect example (see page 96). In this story, Rabbit and Mouse plant seeds, but their selfishness leads to trouble. They discover that planting a seed of kindness is much sweeter. I pair this text with *Be Kind* by Pat Zietlow Miller (2018) as we bond with each other and learn how to use kind words and actions.

Kid-Appealing Content

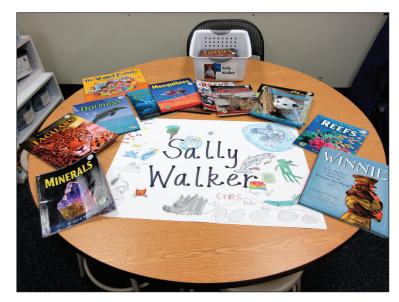
When I look for kid-appealing content, I think about the three categories we use in our classroom when we consider the different reasons that we read (Walther & Phillips, 2012, pp. 44–46). Sometimes we read to laugh, other times we read to learn, and many times we read to ponder. In the *read to laugh* department, you can never go wrong with a *butt* book like *Chicken Cheeks* (Black, 2009) or an *underwear* book such as *Monster's New Undies* (Berger, 2017). In addition to *butt* and *underwear* books, a few others that have a rib-tickling effect include *This Is the Moose* (Morris, 2014) starring a moose who would rather rocket to the moon than be filmed for a nature show and *Bedhead* (Palatini, 2000) featuring Oliver's picture-day misadventures. Certainly, you can't beat any book by Mo Willems to raise the level of laughter in your classroom.

Knowing how important it is to read aloud nonfiction texts to my students, I'm always on the lookout for those that will draw them in. Selecting engaging nonfiction read alouds is the key to *reading to learn*. Not every nonfiction text makes a winning read aloud. Ted Kesler coined the term "poetic nonfiction picture book" to describe books that "blend poetry or poetic qualities and expository writing, expressing an artful level of craft, with provocative effects on readers" (2017, p. 691). Many of the books included in this resource fit into this category such as *All the Water in the World* (Lyon, 2011) and *Squirrels Leap, Squirrels Sleep* (Sayre, 2016). Another type of nonfiction book that works well as a read aloud are those that are structured in such a way that you can read a page or two a day. Books like *Creature Features: 25 Animals Explain Why They Look the Way They Do* (Jenkins & Page, 2014) or *Pink Is for Blobfish: Discovering the World's Perfectly Pink Animals* (Keating, 2016) are perfect for enjoying a bit at a time.

When I'm seeking out books that might cause children to ponder, I choose those that address thought-provoking topics and are told from a child's perspective. For example, we might march with Dr. King alongside Minnie and her sister in *A Sweet Smell of Roses* (Johnson, 2005) or dream of doing something out of the ordinary with Millo in *Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music* (Engle, 2015). Even when you think you've selected a book your kids will love, you might find that you were mistaken. If so, don't be afraid to abandon a book if it is not going well. Say something to the effect of, "I'm noticing this book is not really holding your attention." Make it available for

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Read Aloud = Joy! • 19



Choose winning nonfiction read-aloud texts.

those who were interested to read on their own or check out to finish at home with a family member.

Original Premise

Over the years, I've read enough picture books to begin to see some repetition in ideas, and I can usually spot an instance where the author, illustrator, and/or book designer have decided to try something new and different. For example, when I first read aloud Hervé Tullet's (2011) interactive book *Press Here*, my kids couldn't get enough. The concept that the reader, in some way, had control over the happenings in the book was brilliant. As you've probably noticed, many interactive picture books have followed in *Press Here's* wake, some better than others. Therefore, part of my selection criteria is to look for distinctive examples that will not only engage my readers but also offer invitations to my writers and illustrators. I love introducing my listeners to stories like *This Book Just Ate My Dog* (Byrne, 2014) where all the characters in the book disappear into the gutter of the book or *Robo-sauce* (Rubin, 2015) which invites the reader to re-wrap the book jacket to make a *Robo-book*. As I'm writing these words, I'm sure that picture book creators have many more surprises in store for us. We just have to take the time to read the books and find them.

Unique Perspective

To help children better understand point of view and consider topics for a variety of perspectives, I include books in my read-aloud fare that are told using more than one character's voice in the text or those that approach a topic or an idea from a fresh perspective. A story like *You Will Be My Friend!* (Brown, 2011) is an example of a book told in more than one character's voice. What makes this text even better for drawing students' attention to point of view is that each characters' dialogue is marked in such a way that it differentiates among who is talking because the narrator's words are blue, Lucy's are orange, and Mom's are pink. The second type of book is exemplified by *School's First Day of School* (Rex, 2016). You probably have a handful of *first day of school* books, but this is the first one I've read where the author chose to tell the story from the perspective of the school. This shift in perspective offers readers the opportunity to view a familiar concept in a unique way. Helping children to see the world from

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perspectives other than their own not only will help them as readers, but it will also serve them well as citizens in a global community. Which leads to my last criteria—books that help broaden students' horizons.

Horizon-Broadening Subjects

Only you can select the books that will broaden your students' horizons because you know about your learners' backgrounds, interests, home life, and culture. With this information in mind, I choose these texts that will extend the learning beyond our classroom walls. If you live near the ocean, take a trek through the *Grand Canyon* (Chin, 2017). If your students have never visited a barbershop, join the young protagonist in *Crown: Ode to a Fresh Cut* (Barnes, 2017). Ride a *Rollercoaster* (Frazee, 2003) or a *Locomotive* (Floca, 2013). Looking for books that open windows to other places, situations, or cultures is just one way to broaden your students' horizons. Now that you know how I select books, let's peek into my classroom to see where we read aloud.

Secret #2: A Comfy Place to Read and Listen

If you haven't already created an area to read aloud to your children, here are a few ideas to consider. First, make enough room so that children can sit comfortably in their own space. If you have large class sizes, like I do, you might want to find someone handy to make you a little bench for those sitting in the back of the group.

We have the books, we have the space, next I'll share a few hints to make your delivery as engaging as possible.

Secret #3: Expressive Oral Reading

Each of us has our own read-aloud style, and that's okay. When I'm reading aloud, I think to myself, if I want these kids to love books, this performance has to rival the latest hit movie they are watching. After all, read aloud, like acting or storytelling, is a performance art. It takes time and intentional practice to get even better. The following are a few qualities of a read-aloud performance to consider that will make the experience for your students even richer.

At my fingertips in the read-aloud area

Whiteboard and Markers: Use to write down a vocabulary word you want children to see or draw quick images to define terms.

U. S. and World Map: Grab when you want to locate a setting or trace distances.

Tablet to Access Google Images:are ideal for defining terms and showing learnerspictures of people, places, animals, or objects.

Teacher Notebook: Record children's thinking to place on anchor charts or to refer back to in future conversations.

- Match your tone of voice to the mood of the text: When you think about the mood of the text, consider the author's purpose. How does the author want the reader to feel while experiencing the book? For example, I read Ryan Higgins's rollicking books about Bruce the grumpy bear in a humorous and silly tone of voice (except when Bruce is grouchy!). On the other hand, I read Jane Yolen's (1987) quiet book *Owl Moon* in a peaceful, childlike tone of voice.
- **Vary your pitch:** When reading like a small, weak character you might choose a high pitch. When reading like a big, strong character you could use a low pitch.
- Use pacing, pauses, and volume for dramatic effect: When suspense is building, slow your pace, quiet your voice, and insert long, drawn-out pauses. On the flip side, as excitement mounts or a chase ensues, raise the volume and pick up your pace.
- **Read rhyming texts and poetry with rhythm:** I often find myself tapping my toes to help me keep the rhythm going as I read rhyming books like *The Gruffalo* (Donaldson, 1999) or *Doris the Bookasaurus* (Murray, 2017).

Read Aloud = Joy! • 21

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Reading aloud is just like singing along to your favorite tunes. Some songs are uplifting, others make you cry, some are toe-tapping, and others make you sway back and forth. If you *sing* books to your students, you are sure to compete with the latest video game or box office hit! But sometimes even though you are performing your most expressive reading, kids still need a break, don't be afraid to give them one!

Secret #4: Frequent Brain Breaks

We know that young children can only sit and listen for short amounts of time. If you are reading and discussing a lengthy book you might consider pausing for a *brain break* or two. A brain break might be as simple as inviting the children to stand up and play a quick game of Simon Says or asking listeners to stand when they turn and share their thinking. One tip I've learned over the years is that after they've had a moment to stand, direct students to *shrink back down* by counting backward from a number less than twenty. Before shrinking, I always ask the kids, "What is half of 10?" That way, they will know when their bodies should be half way down. Shrinking down helps calm students before you begin reading again. Other ideas for quick brain breaks include the following:

- Walk around the room one time with your partner while you talk about ____
- This character is grumpy [or another emotion]; stand up and show three people what your face and body look like when you are grumpy [or other emotion].
- Stand up and act out what just happened in the story.
- The word *joy* is an important word in this part of the book. Use your arms to spell the word *joy* (Y. M. C. A. style).

The next secret includes a few classroom management strategies that have served me well over the years.

Secret #5: Joyful and Purposeful Classroom Climate

Be Proactive!

Think about the events that interrupt your read-aloud experiences and develop some go-to responses. I've included a few that I've found helpful on the next page.

Use Strategic Seating—Places for Learning

In our classroom, I have set aside a read-aloud space for my students on the carpet dubbed our *place for learning*. To facilitate smooth transitions from their working spaces to read aloud, I assign each child a designated spot on the floor, so that when it is time to join in our *place for learning* they know exactly where to sit. To do this, I simply make a chart listing the students' names in order on a grid. Depending on how much space you have and the number of students in your class, you might have children sitting in five rows of five or six students. In addition, I strategically match children with a "think and share" partner. By thoughtfully pairing students with a supportive peer, I create situations where they can coach striving learners and those learning English. To build community and give children a chance to interact with a variety of classmates, I adjust their places for learning at least one time per month (Walther & Phillips, 2012). To adapt the expectations and spaces in our place for learning for students with special needs, I've made the following modifications:

- Purchased small plastic chairs (from toddler kitchen sets) for alternative seating
- Posted a photograph of the child exhibiting expected read-aloud behavior

Possible responses to common read-aloud interruptions				
 Develop a silent signal so that students can show you they've read the book before. (In my classroom, the kids put their hands on top of their heads.) 				
 Celebrate rereading by saying something similar to, "I'm so glad to see you've read this book before, because I have a challenge for you. See if you can notice something you didn't hear or see the first time you read this book. That's what learners do when they reread." 				
Say something like, "Sometimes as I read you might notice that you know a person that has the same name as a character in this book. That connection might help you remember the character's name, but it probably won't help your friends, so you can keep it in your head. What may help you even more as a reader is to think about someone who acts that same as the character in the book."				
Have a conversation about why it is essential to let their friends have thinking time by asking, "Why do you think it's important to wait to share your thinking?" Based on students' responses say something like, "When you shout out an answer, that takes away other people's thinking time, and we want to make sure everyone has enough time to think."				

- Offered flexibility with conversational norms
- Provided a copy of the book I was reading to the child to hold and follow along
- Invited children to bring whiteboards and markers to draw on while I'm reading

Finally, I'll share some purposeful ways to use technology tools to enhance your read-aloud experiences.

Secret #6: Meaningful Technology Connections

I grew up as a teacher long before there were document cameras, interactive whiteboards, and the like. I would still argue that nothing beats the real thing—children gathered around you on the floor looking at the actual book. Interactive media can enhance and extend the readaloud experiences in so many ways. For example, on the first page of the book *I Am George Washington* (Meltzer, 2016), readers see George standing in front of Mount Vernon. Children don't realize that Mount Vernon is now a museum of which you can take an online interactive tour. In addition, trade book publishers and authors are creating media that helps promote books and broaden the book experience.

Try these! Tech connections to broaden the read-aloud experience

- Author and Illustrator Websites
- Book Trailers
- Emily Arrow Picture Book Song Videos
- Google Images to Help Define Words or Concepts

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• Connecting With Authors on Twitter

In the box on page 23, you will find few technology connections that students enjoy. In addition, I have included links to many of these connections in the companion website.

Four Ways to Network and Find New Books

When I present about read alouds, teachers often ask, "How do you find all of these books?" Here are the resources I consult when searching for the best books to read to my students.

Consult Your School or Public Librarian

Partner with your school or public librarian. Encourage your school's librarian to highlight what's new in the library by displaying or book talking his or her latest purchases. For example, our school librarian posts pictures of her new purchases above the drinking fountains. If your public library has a children's section, get to know the librarians. The librarians are typically the people who order the books, so they often have access to book review sources. Ask the librarians about their most-recent picture book purchases. Many public libraries display their new books in a certain area and offer teachers increased limits on the number of books they can check out and extended check out time.

Use Social Media

Although social media as a professional learning tool is fairly new to me, I've been active on Twitter since 2013. Having the opportunity to connect with book enthusiasts across the globe has added a whole new dimension to my read-aloud searches. If you haven't already, I would highly recommend joining a professional learning community on Twitter or Facebook. Follow authors, publishers, and other book fanatics. You'll be amazed what you can learn.

Visit Local Independent Book Stores

Unlike employees at chain bookstores, the experts working in the children's section at an independent bookstore have a working knowledge of children's literature and can assist you in locating the most recently published books to match your students' needs or curricular topics. To locate the closest independent bookstore go to Indiebound.org.

Attend Conferences, Edcamps, and Webinars

Join your local or state reading council. They often offer professional learning opportunities at a reasonable cost. Look for Edcamps in your area. National organizations like ILA (International Literacy Association), NCTE (National Council of Teachers of English), and ALA (American Library Associations) have robust websites, professional journals, conferences, and much more to offer. In addition to face-to-face meetings, seek out webinars and other virtual opportunities to connect and learn about books.

Four Ways You Might Use This Book

I designed this book with you, the hard-working teacher, in mind. Each two-page readaloud experience has the same structure so you can easily find the components of the experience that help you the most. I read and studied each book so that, with a quick



View author and illustrator Twitter handles at resources.corwin.com/ rampedup-readaloud

glance before or during, you have the insights you need to enrich the experience. Here are some other ways you can consider using this resource to enhance your literacy instruction.

Enjoy Books With Your Students!

I can't say this enough, so I'll repeat it one last time. I wrote this book so that I could sit by your side as you make read aloud an even more joyful time of your day. My goal was to introduce you to a book or two that you might have missed and send you off to your library or local bookstore with a list. As you share read-aloud experiences with your students and listen to their insightful discussions, share the stories with your colleagues and administrators so that they, too, will embrace the value of reading, thinking, and talking about books.

Energize Your Core Reading/Writing Program

If you already have a core reading or writing program, match the strategies and skills found in the program's scope and sequence to the skills and strategies that appear in the learning targets. You might find the *Learning Target Chart* (located on the companion website) helpful in this work. The Learning Target Chart lists all of the learning targets along with the books and target vocabulary in one at-a-glance document. Once you've matched the learning targets, you can either replace or extend the shared reading titles or writing mentor texts in your program with these books or the questions and extensions that accompany them.

Teach Specific Literacy Skills and Strategies

If you are looking for read-aloud experiences that highlight a specific literacy skill or strategy, start by reading the title of the experience. The titles showcase the big idea of the experience. To dig into the specifics, check out the learning targets. Then, the last bullet in each "Before Reading" section sets a purpose for reading and directly aligns with the learning targets you might choose to focus on with each book. Using these three features, you should be able to easily find the books and experiences that match your students' learning needs.

Assess Learners' Understanding by Extending the Experience

If you choose to use the ideas found in the "Extend the Experience" section of each read-aloud experience, the products that learners create could provide additional insights into your students' understanding of the learning target. You might use these responses as you and your colleagues gather in your professional learning communities to make decisions about students' learning and your next instructional steps. You could also use them to assist you as you decide what types of books to select for your upcoming read-aloud experiences.

Now that I've set the stage, it's your time to shine! I've created meaningful read-aloud experiences that I hope will restore your delight as you share your days with children, while at the same time help you meet the never-ending demands of your state and district initiatives. Once you've gathered the books, you'll have everything you need to keep your students at the edge of their seats as you bring to life the words and illustrations that are hiding between the covers. Wishing you joyful reading!



View the Learning Target Chart at resources.corwin .com/rampedup-readaloud

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"People remembered and would quite often mention that Sally had been paying super extra special attention. And how the world could transform and a change could be made by the smallest girl in the smallest grade."

> *—The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade* by Justin Roberts and Christian Robinson



Create a Joyful Classroom Community

Transforming the Classroom World

The children in our classrooms will have the power to change our world. To prepare learners for the future and help them navigate the present, we teach them much more than the content or the *what* of learning. We spend ample time modeling, practicing, and discussing the *how* and *why*. The purpose of the read-aloud experiences in this chapter is to build a foundation by sharing the *what*, *how*, and *why* of literacy learning in a joyful classroom community. As you layer experience upon experience you will do the following:

- Use and explain key comprehension strategies
- Teach literary language
- Develop students' social and emotional learning
- Foster a growth mindset

Wow! That seems like a lot to think about! Fortunately, I've done most of the work for you. In recent years, I've noticed that I was spending a lot more time on socialemotional learning. In an effort to be proactive rather than reactive, I searched for books that would open conversations about some of the issues that were bubbling up in my classroom. The chapter you hold in your hands is a result of that quest. We know that "helping children recognize that thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are interrelated is an early step toward self-awareness and empathy for others, the basic building blocks of social and emotional development" (Cunningham & Zibulsky, 2014, p. 332). The books in this chapter move children toward becoming more self-aware, while at the same time scaffolding their understanding of literary terms and developing their facility with key comprehension strategies. To start the year off on a positive note, the read-aloud experiences in Chapter 1 will guide your students to do the following:

- Understand Feelings and Emotions
- Develop Empathy and Social Imagination
- Embrace Differences and Include Others
- Become a Problem Solver and Resolve Conflicts
- Exhibit a Growth Mindset

On the next page, I detail the concepts you will introduce while reading aloud the books in this chapter. Additionally, I've written kid-friendly definitions for you to use on anchor charts or as you converse with your students. The beginning of the school year is such an exciting (and exhausting) time. Enjoy getting to know your learners and guiding them as, together, you create a joyful learning community.

Use and Explain Key Comprehension Strategies

Infer: When you infer, you use your schema along with the clues from the text and pictures to figure out what is happening in the story. Some people call inferring "reading between the lines," which means figuring out what the author didn't tell you with his or her words.

Predict: Use clues from the pictures and words to think ahead of your reading or to imagine what might happen next.

Schema: Your schema is everything you've experienced so far in your life. The places you've visited, the experiences you've had, and the stories you've heard. Thinking about what you already know, or using your schema, helps you better understand stories and situations.

Foster a Growth Mindset

Imagine: To picture yourself in real or make-believe places or situations.

Mindset: How your attitude shapes the way you think and act.

Notice: Pay attention to what is happening in the world around you or in the words and pictures in a book.

Persevere: To keep trying even when something is challenging. People who persevere don't give up when things are hard.

Ponder: Pausing and really thinking hard about something before raising your hand or sharing your ideas.

Problem Solve: Using common sense and your schema to figure out different ways to fix or do something.

Think Flexibly: Being able to change your thinking or actions when things don't go exactly as you thought they would.

Create a Joyful Classroom Community

Develop Students' Social and Emotional Learning

Embracing Differences: Understanding that we are all unique and that is what makes our classroom and world so special.

Empathy: Understanding or sharing another's feelings or situation.

Feelings/Emotions: The way our heart and brain react to different situations.

Including Others: Inviting others to join in your group, game, or conversation.

Kindness: Being nice to, helping, or thinking about others.

Resolving Conflicts: Talking with your friends and figuring out a way to agree or compromise so that everyone is happy.

Teach Literary Language

Characters: The people, animals, or other talking objects in a story.

Conflict/Problem: The struggle between the character and him or herself, a character and another character, a character and nature, or a character and their community/world.

Illustrations: The pictures the illustrator created.

Lesson, Moral, Big Idea: The messages that we get from a story and can use in our own lives.

Perspective: Looking at something in a different way.

Point of View: The author's choice of narrator(s) or who is telling you the story.

Resolution: When the conflict is over.

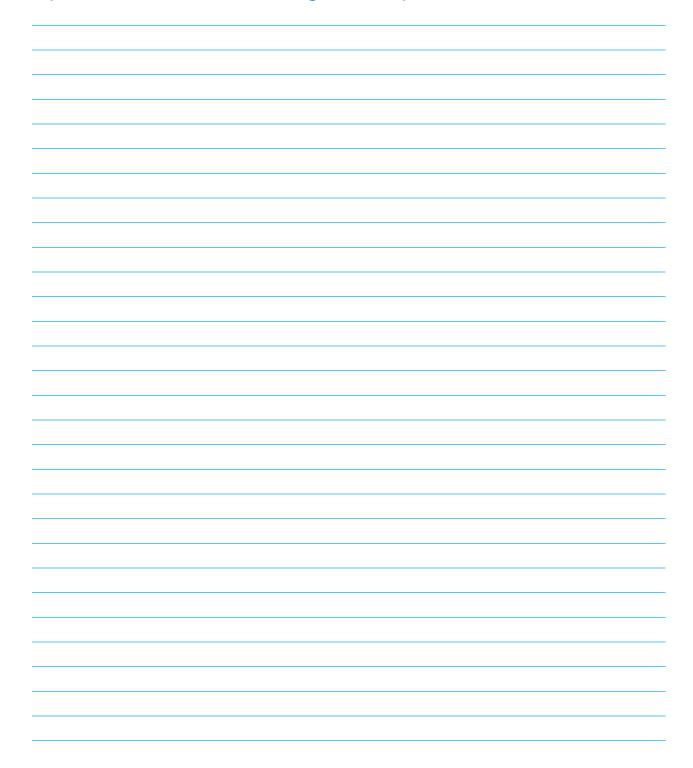
Text: The words the author wrote.

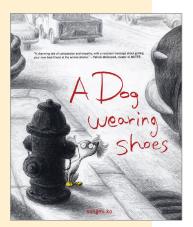
Text Clues: Hints that an author gives you about what is happening in the text using his or her words.

Chapter 1 Concepts, Terms, and Kid-Friendly Definitions

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My Favorite Read Alouds for Creating Community







- I can use illustrations and my schema to infer how a character is feeling.
- I can talk, write, or draw about how the characters felt in the story.

Infer Characters' Feelings

Book Title: A Dog Wearing Shoes (Ko, 2015)

About the Book: Young Mini finds a lost dog wearing little yellow shoes and desperately wants to keep him. One day, while playing at the park, he runs away from her. When she finds him at the animal shelter, she empathizes with his owner and works to reunite the two. After the happy reunion, Mini adopts her own dog from the animal shelter.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Illustrations that clearly reflect the characters' feelings
- Characters who have to make a difficult decision
- Stories about returning lost items

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

- What colors do you see on the cover? This author/illustrator chose to draw all the illustrations with a pencil and add these colors using the computer. I'm wondering if yellow and red are going to be the only colors in this book.... Hmmm.
- What does the back cover blurb say? Turn to a friend and make a prediction based on the blurb.

Set a Purpose: Put a finger on your nose if you have a pet at home. Whether you have a pet or not, let's think about how it would feel if you lost your pet. Turn and tell a neighbor. Keep those feelings in your mind as we read *A Dog Wearing Shoes* because thinking about your emotions can help you infer how the characters in the book are feeling.

During Reading

- [Without disrupting the flow of the story, pause, when appropriate, and invite students to use the illustrations and pose their own questions to help infer the characters varied emotions.]
- *Mini's mom looked everywhere for the dog's owner.* page: Why do you think Mini's mom says, "We'll have to take him home **for now**?"
- *And then he started barking*. page: What do you think Mini should do? Turn and talk with your thinking buddy about that. Look at the way Mini's mom is standing. Can you infer from her body language how mom is feeling? What do you think Mini's mom wants her to do?
- *Now Mini knew.*.. page: What happened to change Mini's mind? [If your students are familiar with the story *Horrible Bear*! (Dyckman, 2016; see read-aloud experience on page 32), you can compare and contrast the two stories.]

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After Reading

• You've been sitting and listening for a while, so stand up and talk to your partner about this question: Why do you think Sangmi Ko wrote this story? What lesson did you learn from this story? Remember to listen and learn while your partner is teaching you.

Extend the Experience:

- Draw a picture showing how Mini felt when she lost the dog. Explain how this event changed her thinking.
- If you find a lost item at school what might you do? Write down three ideas to share with your friends.

Other similar titles:

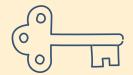


A Bike Like Sergio's (Boelts, 2016) (See read-aloud experience on page 92)

About the Book: Ruben is longing for a bike just like his friend Sergio's bike, but his family can't afford one. While he and Sergio are out shopping, a woman drops some money. Ruben, thinking it's a dollar bill, puts it in his pocket. When he gets home, he realizes it is a \$100 bill. In the end, Ruben decides to return to the money to the woman.

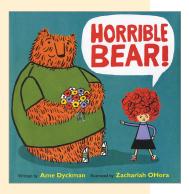


About the Book: Ruthie loves teeny things-the smaller the better. When she finds a tiny toy camera on the school playground, she can hardly believe her luck. There's just one problem-the camera belongs to Martin! When questioned by her teacher, Ruthie insists the toy is hers, but deep down, she knows better. Ultimately, Ruthie tells the truth.



Key Vocabulary:

- attracted
- mood
- pranced





View the book trailer at resources.corwin.com/ rampedup-readaloud



Learning Targets:

- I can use illustrations, text clues, and my schema to infer how a character is feeling.
- I can talk, write, or draw about how the characters in the story responded to events.
- I can talk, write, or draw about how I can use what I've learned from this story in my own life.

Apply New Understandings

Book Title: Horrible Bear! (Dyckman, 2016)

About the Book: A red-headed girl gets VERY upset and yells at bear when he accidentally breaks her kite. Bear is *indignant* and plots to get her back. Use this book when discussing how to work out misunderstandings with peers.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Illustrations that clearly reflect the characters' feelings
- Characters who get angry and figure out how to calm themselves down
- Characters who have a misunderstanding and work it out

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

• Notice the Cover Illustration:

- What do you notice about the title on the cover? [The title is in a speech bubble.] Why do you think the illustrator chose to do that?
- How do Zachariah OHora's bold illustrations help you to infer how the girl is feeling?

Set a Purpose: As we read this story together, notice the characters' faces and think about their emotions. We'll also ponder what we can learn from this story and how we can use this new learning in our own lives.

During Reading

- *Bear was indignant.* page: Look at the illustration. What is Bear's reaction? It says he's *indignant*. That means he's mad because he believes he is being blamed for something he didn't do. Do you agree?
- *"SHE woke ME up!"* page: Now let's look closely at Bear's face on this page; how is it different than the page before? Do you have any predictions about Bear's horrible idea?
- *"Oh."* page: Why do you think the girl is saying, "Oh"? How is she feeling now? What do you suppose made her change her thinking about Bear's actions?
- *And together, they patched everything up.* page: When you "patch things up" with your friends what does that mean? Can you infer from their faces how they are feeling now?

After Reading

• Let's go back, look at, and talk about the front and back end papers, the front and back of the book jacket, and the front and back of the book case. [The front end papers show the girl's bright red hair and the back end papers picture the top of bear's head.]

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Extend the Experience:

- *But she was too upset to nap.* page: Let's turn back to this page. When the girl went back to her house, she tried to do a few things to cool off, such as drawing, reading, talking to her "stuffie." What are some different ways you can calm down when you are angry? [Co-create an anchor chart with your students or invite them to write about ways they cool off (see below for examples).]
- Draw a picture of the girl's face at the beginning of the story after Bear broke her kite and at the end of the story when they worked together to fix it. Use your pictures to help you explain to a friend how her feelings changed and what events in the story caused them to change.

Other similar titles:

Pug & Doug (Breen, 2013)

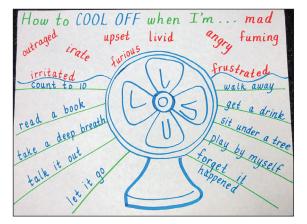
About the Book: Even pals who both love listening to polka music and have a secret "pawshake" can have their own individual interests. When a misunderstanding threatens their friendship, Pug and Doug agree to "talk things over. Because that's what best friends do." Your students will enjoy the funny ending of this book!

Shawn Loves Sharks (Manley, 2017)

About the Book: Shawn is obsessed with sharks; he loves to pretend he is one and chase Stacy around the playground. When their teacher announces that each student will each be learning about a different predator, Shawn gets the leopard seal, while Stacy picks the shark. Then, Stacy begins to chase Shawn around the playground. One day, he yells at her and hurts her feelings. In the end, he realizes his mistake, and they learn about predators together.

What James Said (Rosenberg, 2015)

About the Book: The main character spends a lot of time and energy being mad at James because someone told her that he said, "I think I am perfect." In the end, she discovers that what she heard through the grapevine wasn't exactly true. Rosenberg tells this tale in first-person narrative from the little girl's point of view.



Ways to Cool Off				
Taking a deep breath	Doing some yogd. and dosing your eyes lightly			
	ØWalther & Phillips, 2014, Revised 8/9/14			



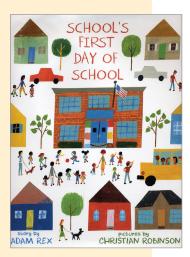


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Key Vocabulary:

- barged
- horrible
- ruckus

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- I can use illustrations, text clues, and my schema to infer how a character is feeling.
- I can notice who is telling the story.
- I can ponder why the author chose to tell the story from a certain point of view.

Consider Different Points of View

Book Title: School's First Day of School (Rex, 2016)

About the Book: Newly constructed Frederick Douglass Elementary is ready to open. But it (yes, the school) is a little nervous about the students' arrival. Reassured by his friend Janitor, School opens its doors and experiences many of the emotions your students feel on the first day of school. Adam Rex and Caldecott-winner Christian Robinson have created a distinctive beginning-of-the-year book told from the point of view of the school.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Illustrations that clearly reflect the characters' feelings
- Characters experiencing a wide range of emotions
- Stories told from a unique point of view

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

- Look at the wrap-around cover that Christian Robinson created using paint and collage techniques. Collage is when the illustrator cuts and glues different papers or other materials together to create a picture. What is happening on this cover?
- The title of this story is *School's First Day of School*. Think about that for a minute. Who do you think this story will be about? Is that different than other first-day-of-school books we've read?
- Title page: What do you notice on this page? [The school is under construction.]

Set a Purpose: Listeners, as I'm reading, we're going to think about who is telling you the story, that's called *point of view*. Also, notice the different feelings or emotions the characters experience on their first day of school. I can't wait to learn from your questions and thinking about this story!

During Reading

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- *A sign above the door read, FREDERICK DOUGLASS ELEMENTARY*. page: Who is thinking aloud on this page? That's right, it's the school!
- *The school creaked.* page: How is the school feeling about children coming? [nervous, worried] Did any of you feel that way on your first day?
- *Some of the older kids gathered.* . . page: Can you infer how school is feeling on this page? What do you think the author means by, "The school sagged a little?"
- *He was so embarrassed.* page: Think of a time when you were embarrassed. What happened to make you feel embarrassed? What sometimes happens to a person's face when he or she is embarrassed? [cheeks turn red]

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After Reading

- Why do you think the author chose to write this story from the school's point of view?
- Did you notice that school and the children had many different feelings on the first day of school? Let's look back and see if we can find some different ways characters were feeling in this story. [nervous, worried, amazed, sad, angry, sorry, scared, embarrassed, happy, proud, lucky]

Extend the Experience:

- Using the *My First Day of School Reproducible Response Page* located on the companion website, think about how the school felt on the first day of school. Write about how you felt on your first day.
- Justin Roberts made it seem as if the school was a living thing. Are there other inanimate (or non-living) things you could write about on the first day of school? Let's make a quick list in our writer's notebooks [or on a piece of chart paper].
- [Some possibilities include Pencil's First Day of School, Backpack's First Day of School, Lunchbox's First Day of School]

Other similar titles:

Dog Days of School (DiPucchio, 2014)

About the Book: When Charlie's wish comes true and he becomes a dog, Norman, his dog, goes off to school. Charlie soon discovers that being a dog isn't as relaxing as he thought!

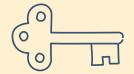
First Day Jitters (Danneburg, 2000)

About the Book: Sarah Jane Hartwell does not want to go to school because she doesn't know anybody, and she predicts it's going to be hard. After much cajoling, Mr. Hartwell gets her into the car and drops her off at school. Once in the classroom, readers discover, she is not a student-instead she's the teacher.

My First Day of School					
l felt		I felt			
when					

My First Day of School Reproducible Response Page

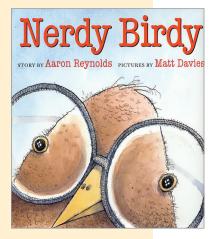
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Key Vocabulary:

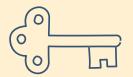
- bored
- embarrassed
- worry

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- I can imagine how book characters might feel.
- I can talk, write, or draw about the characters' feelings in a book.



Key Vocabulary:

- confused
- exhausting
- lonely

Imagine Characters' Feelings

Book Title: Nerdy Birdy (Reynolds, 2015)

About the Book: Nerdy Birdy is not like the other cool birdies. One day, a group of nerdy birdies invite him to join their flock. But when Nerdy Birdy tries to welcome another unusual bird (Vulture) to join the group, the flock refuses. So, Nerdy Birdy decides to befriend Vulture on his own.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters who display empathy, kindness, and understanding
- Characters who are excluded by others
- Characters who face moral dilemmas

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

• Look at the bird on the back of the book. What do you infer is going on? [They are teasing Nerdy Birdy.] How do you think the bird on the cover is feeling? Turn and tell your friend if you've ever felt that way. Then, ask your friend the same question.

Set a Purpose: People who show empathy think about how others are feeling. As we read *Nerdy Birdy*, we will zoom in on the characters' emotions and ponder how it might feel to be in the same situation.

During Reading

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- *Three things Nerdy Birdy is good at.* . . page: I see that Matt Davies has made a funny joke in his illustrations on the page. See the computer, instead of an apple logo, like some computers, it has a banana on it!
- *One day, Eagle flew off to hunt.* page: Can you imagine how Nerdy Birdy is feeling? Have you ever felt the same way?
- *One thing was clear.* page: Wait! Where or who do you think that question is coming from?
- *And then he realized something.* page: Do you think Nerdy Birdy is feeling differently now? Why do you think that?
- *"Right, guys?"* page: Hmmm! Look at Vulture's face. Do you think the Nerdy Birdies are going to agree?
- *Nerdy Birdy looked at his flock of friends.* page: What do you suppose Nerdy Birdy is going to do? Why?
- *This is Nerdy Birdy.* page: Why do you think Nerdy Birdy chose to befriend Vulture? [You might choose to discuss empathy here. Nerdy Birdy remembered how it felt to be lonely.]

After Reading

- Do you have any lingering questions?
- What do you think Nerdy Birdy and Vulture are going to do next?

Extend the Experience:

- As we look through the book again, let's make a list of some of the feelings and emotions we noticed and imagined. [Some possibilities might include proud, stuck-up, mean, unkind, cruel, lonely, nice, friendly, kind, confused, and disappointed.]
- On this sticky note, write the words you think Nerdy Birdy or Vulture might say on the last page. Share your idea with a friend.

Other similar titles:

Ally-Saurus and the First Day of School (Torrey, 2015)

About the Book: During lunch, Ally, who loves dinosaurs, is turned away by a group of princesses but finds another group of friends-each with their own unique interest. At the end, the teacher takes the class to the library where they all select books to match their interest.

One (Otoshi, 2008)

About the Book: This is an amazing book about bullying! When you first begin reading, you may think it is a book about colors until you realize that the quiet color blue and his buddies are being bullied by the hot-headed color red. Fortunately, "one" shows up and teaches the colors to stand up for themselves.

Read These!

Books Where Characters Display Empathy and Kindness



How to Heal a Broken Wing (Graham, 2008)

About the Book: This book begins before the title page, when a bird flies into a building, breaks its wing, and plummets to the ground. No one notices, except a young boy named Will who, with help from his parents, nurses the bird back to health.



Little Fox in the Forest (Graegin, 2017)

About the Book: In this wordless picture book, a little girl brings her favorite stuffed animal, a fox, to school for show and tell. After school, she leaves it near the swings. Little Fox grabs it and runs into the forest. After searching through the forest, the girl and her friend find Little Fox's house in a magical forest town. Upon seeing how upset the Little Fox is when she takes the stuffed toy away, she lets him keep it. He returns the favor by giving her a stuffed unicorn.



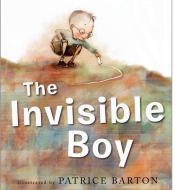
Samson in the Snow (Stead, 2016)

About the Book: As Samson lovingly cares for his dandelion patch, he longs for a companion. One day, a little red bird appears and asks Samson if she can have some flowers to give to her friend who is having a bad day. Samson gives her the flowers and she flies away. That evening a snowstorm blows in. Samson, worried about red bird, sets off to find her. On his quest he saves red bird and her pal mouse. and the trio become friends.

Stick and Stone (Ferry, 2015)

About the Book: Stick and Stone become buddies when Stick stands up to Pinecone who is bullying Stone. Tom Lichtenheld's expressive illustrations offer plenty of opportunities to ask students, "Can you infer how the character is feeling?"

TRUDY LUDWIG





Learning Targets:

- I can empathize (understand or share another's feelings or situation) with book characters.
- I think about how I would show empathy in situations at school and at home.

Empathize With Characters' Feelings

Book Title: The Invisible Boy (Ludwig, 2013)

About the Book: Quiet, shy, Brian has difficulty making friends. He's not included at lunch or on the playground. When a new boy, Justin, joins the class, Brian treats him nicely. Justin returns the kindness and invites him to join the group.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters who display empathy, kindness, and understanding
- Characters who are different than their peers

Comprehension Conversation:

) Before Reading

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Notice the Cover Illustration:

- Think about the title *The Invisible Boy* while you're looking carefully at the cover illustration. Do you see an invisible boy? [No, he looks like a regular boy.]
- I wonder why Trudy Ludwig called this book *The Invisible Boy*.
- Are you wondering anything else?

Set a Purpose: How would you feel if you were invisible? [Some children might think it would be cool to be invisible. Try to steer their conversation toward how it would feel if no one paid attention to them.] I wonder how he feels? Understanding how another person is feeling is called empathy. Let's see if we can better understand how it might feel to be *The Invisible Boy*.

During Reading

- *Can you see Brian, the invisible boy?* page: What did the illustrator, Patrice Barton, do to make Brian look different from the rest of the kids? [He's drawn in black, white, and gray, and everyone else is drawn in full color.] Look at his face. Can you imagine how it feels to have your teacher not notice you? Can you empathize with Brian?
- *Nathan and Sophie take up a lot of space.* page: What does the author mean when she says they "take up a lot of space." Are they bigger than Brian? [No, they just take up more of her time because she is always having to remind them to do what is expected.]
- *J.T. glances in Brian's direction and*. . . page: Look at Brian's face. How do you think he is feeling? Have you ever felt that way? When you can understand how Brian is feeling in this situation, you are showing empathy. What are the other kids doing to make him feel like that? [J.T. and the other kids don't include him in their play.]
- *And the kids laugh.* page: What words might you use to describe J.T.? [mean, bully, unkind]

• *The next day, when Justin goes to his cubby.* . . page: How do you suppose Brian's note made Justin feel? Could you do something like that when you see a friend feeling sad?

After Reading

- Now that you've heard the story, talk to your neighbor about the title *The Invisible Boy*. Remember to take turns sharing your thinking and learning from your neighbor. Did empathizing or thinking about Brian's feelings help you better understand the story?
- Look back at the cover illustration. What do you notice? [Brian is drawn in color on the cover.] Why do you suppose he's drawn in color here?
- In the story, what things did Justin do to make Brian feel less invisible? [tells Brian his drawing is cool, invites Brian into the group project with Emilio, has Brian do the drawing because he knows he's good at it, waves Brian over at lunch time]

Extend the Experience:

- The kids in Brian's class *excluded* him. That means they didn't invite him to join in on their conversations or play. Think about how you would feel if you were excluded. What can you do if you see someone being excluded? Write or draw a picture to share with the class.
- One of Brian's special talents was drawing. What are your special talents? [Students can either draw a picture of themselves and draw or write their talents around the picture, or you can take a picture of them, print it, and have them do the same. Another option is to have learners make a "word cloud" about themselves using Wordle ™ http://www.wordle.net/.]

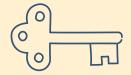
Other similar titles:

The Bad Seed (John, 2017)

About the Book: A sunflower seed acknowledges that he makes bad choices, and therefore, others view him as *a bad seed*. Then, readers learn about why he has chosen to be a bad seed (he was packaged and almost eaten by a baseball fan). Eventually, he decides to try hard to change his ways. Notice that the other characters that surround the bad seed are also seeds like peanuts, pistachios, coconuts, and corn kernels!

We're All Wonders (Palacio, 2017)

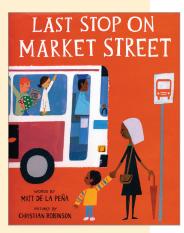
About the Book: Conceptually based on the themes in the novel *Wonder* (Palacio, 2012), this picture book features Auggie who looks different than his peers. Written in first-person voice, Auggie shares how it feels to be unique and his hopes that others will change the way they see and accept him as a "wonder."



Key Vocabulary:

- invisible
- glances

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- I can empathize (understand or share another's feelings or situation) with book characters.
- I think about how I would show empathy in situations at school and at home.
- I can talk. write. or draw about how I can use what I've learned from this story in my own life.

Learn From Characters' Experiences

Book Title: Last Stop on Market Street (de la Peña, 2015)

About the Book: Although the reader doesn't know it, CJ and his grandmother are taking the city bus to a soup kitchen on the other side of town. Along the way, nana teaches CJ some important life lessons.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Intergenerational family stories
- · Characters who display empathy, kindness, and understanding



Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

[Christian Robinson created the illustrations using acrylic paint, collage, and a bit of digital manipulation.]

- Look at the illustration on the wrap-around cover and think about the title *Last* Stop on Market Street. What do you predict this book might be about?
- Have you ever ridden on a city bus? Tell us one detail about your ride. [After a few children share their schema about city bus rides say, "Thanks for sharing. That helps us all understand a bit more about the story."]

Set a Purpose: I'm wondering where CJ and his grandma are going and what might happen along the way. As we travel with them, I'm going to think about how I would feel if I were in their situation. Do you remember what that's called? [Empathy!]

During Reading

- The bus lurched forward and stopped, lurched forward and stopped. page: Where do you think CJ and his nana might be going? Any ideas?
- "I feel sorry for those boys," she told him. page: Why do you think CJ is feeling sorry for himself? [Because his friends Miguel and Colby don't have to go "here" after church.] Have you wished you could do something your friends were doing? If you understand that feeling, you are empathizing with CJ.
- And in the darkness, the rhythm lifted CJ. . . page: Turn and talk with your friend about the clues that help you infer how the music changes CJ's mood. [He closed his eyes and imagined flying; the sound gave him "the feeling of magic."] Have you ever heard music that changed your mood?
- *CJ saw the perfect rainbow arching over the soup kitchen*. page: Do you have schema for a soup kitchen? What do people do at a soup kitchen? What do you notice about CJ's nana? [She always finds the beautiful or looks on the bright side.]

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Develop Empathy and Social Imagination

After Reading

- How did CJ's attitude change from the beginning to the end of the story? Could you empathize or understand why he was feeling the way he did?
- What lessons can we learn from CJ's grandmother? [look at the bright side; show empathy; be kind; find the beautiful]
- How might you use those lessons in our classroom?
- How might you use them in your life?

Extend the Experience:

- Let's create a chart that shows all the acts of kindness found in this book.
- Write and illustrate a lesson you learned from either CJ or his nana.

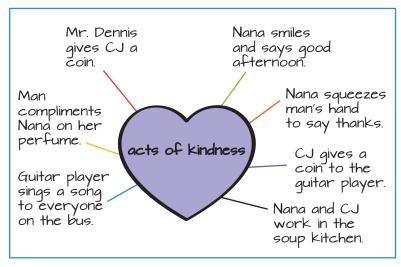
Other similar titles:

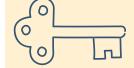
Come With Me (McGhee, 2017)

About the Book: A little girl who is frightened by what she hears and sees on the news asks both her dad and mom what she can do to change the world. Each parent says, "Come with me" and takes her out to experience their diverse neighborhood. Then, her parents let her go out to walk the dog, so she invites a neighbor and others to join her.

Something Beautiful (Wyeth, 1998)

About the Book: A young girl looks around her neighborhood searching for something beautiful. Each of the people she encounters share the beauty they've found in everyday occurrences. This book is written in first-person narrative from an African-American girl's point of view.





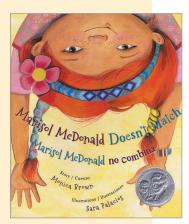
Key Vocabulary:

- aboard
- lurched
- rhythm



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Kindness Chart





- I can figure out the lessons the characters' learned.
- I can talk, write, or draw about the lessons the characters' learned.

Understand Characters' Life Lessons

Book Title: Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match/Marisol McDonald no combina (Brown, 2011)

About the Book: Marisol is a multiracial girl who likes to do things her own unique way. Tired of everyone telling her that she doesn't match, Marisol decides to try to match. After noticing a change in Marisol's attitude and artwork, Ms. Apple, the art teacher, writes a note encouraging Marisol to be her own creative self.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters who come to appreciate themselves
- Theme of embracing differences

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

Look carefully at the illustration on the cover. The title is *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match*. Can you see anything on Marisol that doesn't match? Did you notice that the title is in English and Spanish? This book is written in both languages so whether you read in English, Spanish, or both, you can read this book!

Set a Purpose: Let's read so you can help me figure out why Monica Brown chose the title *Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match* and what Marisol learns about herself in this book.

During Reading

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- *My name is Marisol McDonald, and I don't match.* page: How do you think it makes Marisol feel that everyone tells her she doesn't match? Let's read some more to find out.
- *I also love peanut butter and jelly*. . . page: [If you and the kids don't already know who speaks more than one language, you could ask the following question.] How many of you speak more than one language like Marisol and her family?
- *The next day, I wake up.*.. page: Look at Marisol's face. How do you suppose trying to match is making her feel?
- *At the end of the day, Mrs. Apple hands me a note.* page: What does Ms. Apple do to make Marisol skip home? [Reassures her that is okay to be unique. Also, notice that Ms. Apple also writes her name in cursive and printing!]

After Reading

• Let's go back to page 16 where Ollie scrunches his nose at Marisol's sandwich. If you saw Ollie doing that, what might you say to him?

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Extend the Experience:

- What do you think Marisol learned about herself in this book? Write and/or draw to explain your thinking.
- Marisol didn't like to match. What is something you don't like to do?

Other similar titles:



Antoinette (DiPucchio, 2017)

About the Book: Antoinette isn't quite sure what makes her special until her doggie friend Ooh-La-La goes missing. With persistence and courage, Antoinette follows Ooh-La-La into the Louvre and saves her from a *perilous fall*.

I Don't Want to Be a Frog (Petty, 2015)

About the Book: This amusing story, told all in speech bubbles, is about self-acceptance. A small frog is convinced he no longer wants to be a frog, but his wise father and a hungry wolf set him straight.

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We Are Growing (Keller, 2016)

About the Book: One of the books in the Mo Willems's Elephant and Piggie Like Reading series featuring a blade of grass named Walt. Walt's friends are all growing and becoming the "something-est" but he isn't. When the blades are all mowed down and Walt helps clean up, he discovers that he is the neatest!

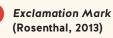
Read These!

Books About Embracing Differences



Pook: In his brightly

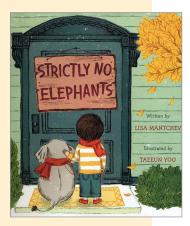
About the Book: In his brightlycolored signature style, Todd Parr reminds readers to "be the best you can be!"



About the Book: Feeling alone in a world of periods, the exclamation mark tries everything to fit in and is about to give up when he meets the question mark. Question mark helps him discover his unique talent–exclaiming! Notice that the book does not have a title on the cover and the pages are made out of children's handwriting paper.

Why Am I Me? (Britt, 2017)

About the Book: A celebration of diversity and of who we are, not only as individuals but also as a collective we in the world.



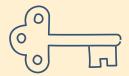


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Learning Targets:

- I can figure out the lesson, moral, or big idea.
- I can find clues in the text to support my thinking.
- I can talk, write, or draw about the lesson, moral, or big idea.



Key Vocabulary:

- brave (verb)
- coax
- strictly

Find Clues to Infer Life Lessons

Book Title: Strictly No Elephants (Mantchev, 2015)

About the Book: A boy and his tiny elephant don't fit in with the other members of the The Pet Club, so he and a skunk-owning girl start their own club where all are welcome.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Theme of embracing differences
- Characters who appreciate and include others even when they are different from themselves

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

• Notice the Cover Illustration:

- In Taeeun Yoo's cover illustration, we can't see the boy's face, but we can read the title and infer how he is feeling.
- Notice that she put the title on a sign, and it reads, *Strictly No Elephants*. The word *strictly* means you absolutely need to follow that direction. At our school, we have a rule in the winter—strictly no snowball throwing. Do you have any rules like that at home? Share one with your neighbor. Say, "Strictly No ______."

Set a Purpose: Did you know that sometimes authors write books, and they hide lessons or messages inside of them? As readers, we can talk together and figure out what messages are hidden in the book. Get ready to try it today!

During Reading

- *I always go back and help him over*. page: What does the boy mean when he says friends "lift each other over the cracks?" What is the author trying to tell us about friendship? What clues help you to know that?
- *When I look up, there's a sign on the door.* page: Now we get to see a similar illustration as the one of the cover, but we can see the boy's face. Do you remember what the sign said? Let's look back at the cover. Wow! How would that make you feel if you had an elephant for a pet?
- *"The sign didn't mention skunks . . ."* page: What do you think the boy means by "they don't know any better?"
- *So we paint our own sign.* page: What does their sign read? Does this sign help you to figure out the author's message or lesson? [First they wrote, "Strictly No Strangers, No Spoilsports." Then they changed the sign to read, "All Are Welcome." They went from excluding to including.]

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After Reading

• What do you think the hidden lessons or messages are in *Strictly* No Elephants? Can you find places in the book that helped you to figure them out? [Be a good friend (all the tips about friendship), include others (they start their own club), and other lessons your children find and share.]



Extend the Experience:

- Write and/or draw a picture of the lesson you learned from this book.
- Let's go back and look at the different things that friends do in this book [lift each other over cracks, brave the scary things, never leave anyone behind]. Can you think of other things that friends do for each other? Let's make a list together! [To extend this conversation about friendship, read aloud other books about friendship.]

Other similar titles:



About the Book: Janine is excluded from a party because she is different, but instead of being upset, she has her own party and invites EVERYONE! The author wrote this book about her daughter, Janine, who has bravely navigated her life with disabilities.

Odd Velvet (Whitcomb, 1998)

About the Book: Velvet, who begins the school year without a new dress and without friends, is slowly appreciated for her uniqueness.

Read These! Books About Friendship

Big Friends (Sarah, 2014)

About the Book: Birt and Etho are two "Big friends" who love to play together with their cardboard boxes. When Shu joins their play, Birt feels left out. As a result, he stops playing with Etho and Shu until they entice him back with their "incredible Monster-Creature-Box Thing."

Friendshape (Rosenthal, 2015)

About the Book: In an effort to answer the question "What's so great about having friends?," four shapes tell you all about friendship. Amy Krouse Rosenthal and Tom Lichtenheld's illustrated shapes are full of emotions and visual jokes. Read this book to spark a discussion about the joys of friendship.

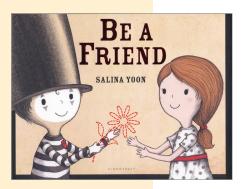
The Friend Ship (Yeh, 2016)

About the Book: Lonely Hedgehog overhears animals saying, "Friendship is out there-all she has to do is look." He sets out on the Friend Ship to look for companions. As the ship fills with friends, Hedgehog realizes he's found what he was looking for.

The Name Jar (Choi, 2001)

About the Book: As Unhei is leaving Korea to go to her new home in America, her grandmother gives her a wooden stamp etched with her name. On the school bus, when she introduces herself, the children make fun of her Korean name. So, Unhei tells her classmates she hasn't decided on a name. To help her choose, the class creates a name jar filled with suggestions. When a kind boy hears her Korean name, he encourages her to choose that, and she finally does.

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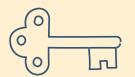


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Learning Targets:

- I can figure out the lesson, moral, or big idea.
- I can talk, write, or draw about how I can apply the lesson, moral, or big idea in my own life.



Key Vocabulary:

- invisible
- lonely
- ordinary

Apply Life Lessons

Book Title: Be a Friend (Yoon, 2016)

About the Book: Dennis chooses to express himself using mime. Unable to communicate with his peers, he feels lonely and invisible. The other children don't try to get to know him until he meets Joy. Together, he and Joy find a nonverbal way to communicate and play together.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Theme of embracing differences
- Characters who appreciate and include others even when they are different from themselves

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

• [To engage readers, you might choose to introduce the concept of miming by miming, rather than talking, for a few minutes.]

Notice the Cover Illustration:

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- Notice the way the boy is dressed. Have you even seen someone dressed like this before? [If needed, introduce the word *mime* and talk a little bit about what mimes do.]
- Why do you think Salina Yoon drew the flower with red dotted lines?
- Think about the title *Be a Friend*. Talk with a neighbor about what you think is happening on the cover. [Perhaps the boy is giving the flower to the girl because he wants to be her friend.]
- [If you have a hardcover book and can remove the book jacket, notice that the book case is the same design as the boy's shirt and has the red heart *pinned* to it.]

Set a Purpose: Friendship is an important part of our lives. Think about what it means to "Be a Friend" as we read and talk about this book.

During Reading

- ... who expressed himself in EXTRAORDINARY ways. page: What do you notice about the clothes in his closet? Why do you think he wears white gloves?
- *Everyone called him MIME BOY*. page: Why do you think Dennis chooses to mime?
- Two-page spread of Dennis miming page: Let's stand up and do some of Dennis's actions together. Stay in your own space and remember when you are miming you are not making any sounds. Are you up for the challenge?

Maria's Thinking: When reading to wiggly children, it is essential to provide time for brain breaks and movement. In this book, for a movement break, you might choose to invite students to stand up and mime the activities that Dennis is miming.

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Embrace Differences and Include Others

- It was as if he were standing on the other side of a WALL. page: What do you notice about the other children? What might happen next? [The girl is looking at Dennis. If you turn back to the previous pages where she appears, she is also doing her own thing.]
- *There was no wall between Dennis and Joy.* page: Why do you think Salina Yoon chose to name the girl "Joy"?
- But they laughed out loud with JAZZ HANDS . . . page: Hmmm! Look carefully at their shirts. What do you notice? [The red heart that was on Dennis's shirt is now on Joy's shirt.]

After Reading

- What happened in the end? [All of the children joined Dennis and Joy in their play.]
- Think back to title. What are the big ideas in this book? What lesson can we learn from reading this book?



Extend the Experience:

- What does it mean to *be a friend*? [Encourage your students to dig deeper than simply, "be nice" or "play together." See the chart and work sample for some of the ideas my first graders came up with.
- What is the big idea of this book? Using the *Big Idea Reproducible Response Page* located on the companion website, write about how you felt on the first day of school.

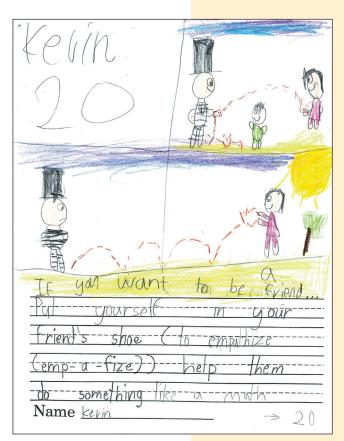
Other similar titles:

Tommy Can't Stop (Federle, 2015)

About the Book: "Tommy's gotta bop." He also likes to bounce, kick, clomp, and hurdle. He is so full of energy that his family looks for ways to tire him out. Finally, a reluctant Tommy tries tap dancing and discovers that he's got talent.

If you want to be a friend... ·Help your friend do things. ·Stand up for your friend. · Notice how your friends are feeling and do something. ·Invite people to play____ · Ask them questions____ Give a compliment. Listen to them. · Put yourself in your friend's shoes.

Be a Friend Chart



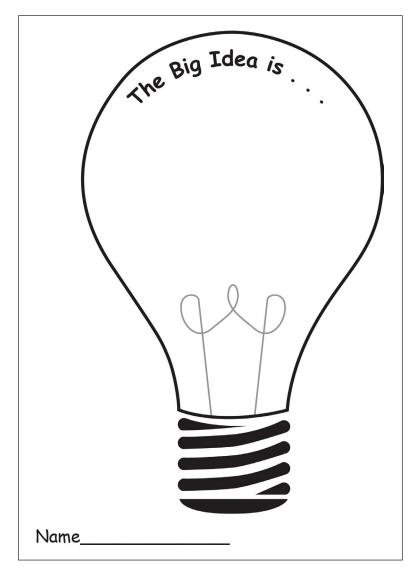
Be a Friend Work Sample

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The Sandwich Swap (Al Abdullah & DiPucchio, 2010)

About the Book: In this story of tolerance and acceptance, Salma and Lily eat different kinds of sandwiches, and each girl voices her distaste for the other's food. This attitude snowballs resulting in a school-wide food fight. In the end, the best friends work together to organize a multicultural feast for all.



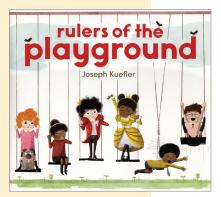


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My Favorite Read Alouds for Developing Empathy and Embracing Differences

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Identify the Problem

Book Title: Rulers of the Playground (Kuefler, 2017)

About the Book: Jonah and Lennox both want to be rulers of the playground. So, they divide the playground in half and try to conquer their side by telling the other kids what to do. Soon the other children get tired of being bossed around, so they leave. Realizing their mistake, the rulers work together to solve the problem. Read this book if you have children who LOVE being in charge.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Plots with a clear problem and solution
- Characters who look for different ways to solve a problem
- Setting that includes a playground

Comprehension Conversation:

) Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

• Look closely at Joseph Kuefler's illustration on the cover. Which children do you think are the "Rulers of the Playground?" Now look at the expressions of the other kids on the swings. Are they all feeling the same way? Turn and chat about this with your friend.

Set a Purpose: Can you predict what the problem might be in this story? Let's read to find out if your prediction matches Joseph Kuefler's thinking.

During Reading

- *Jonah's kingdom had slides, so everyone pinkie promised.* page: Does it look like the other kids are okay with Jonah being the ruler of the playground? Do you think it is fair? Share your thinking with a partner. Don't forget to ask them what they think and why.
- *Everyone except for Lennox*. . . page: You can tell Lennox's mood by looking at the picture. What do you imagine she will do next?
- *"This side of the playground is not mine," announced Lennox.* page: What do you suppose her friends were thinking when Lennox *announced* this to them. Do you like when your friends tell you what to do? How might you handle this situation?
- *King Jonah and Queen Lennox claimed the entire playground.* page: Talk with your friend about what happened on this page. [Nobody wants to play with Jonah and Lennox anymore.]
- *"We're done conquering," said Jonah.* page: How did Lennox and Jonah solve the problem?

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Learning Targets:

- I can identify the problem in a story.
- I can think about the actions the character took to solve a problem.
- I can use what I've learned from books to help me solve problems.

After Reading

- I heard you all say, "Oh no!" and "Not again!" when I read the ending. Why did you say that? [Because now Augustine wants to rule the playground!]
- What did you learn from this book that you can use when you play on the playground?
- Look at the end papers. The front end papers show Jonah's version of the playground and the back end papers show Lennox's. Let's see if they are the same or different.

Extend the Experience:

- Draw the characters on the playground. Label the playground problems you noticed in the story.
- After reading this book, what playground advice do you have for your friends? Write it on this speech bubble and we'll put it up in the hallway near the playground to remind us.

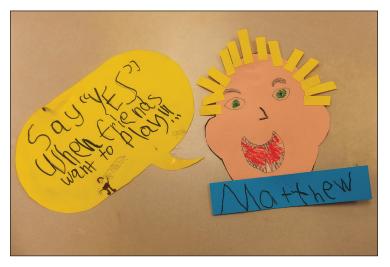
Other similar titles:

King of the Playground (Naylor, 1991)

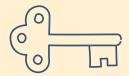
About the Book: Kevin wants to go to the playground, but he knows if his Sammy "king of the playground" is there, he won't let Kevin play on the equipment. Each time this happens, Kevin's father gives him strategies or encouragement for dealing with Sammy. Finally, Kevin faces Sammy, and they end up playing together.

The Recess Queen (O'Neill, 2002)

About the Book: Mean Jean was Recess Queen, and no one said any different until a new student came and decided to change things.

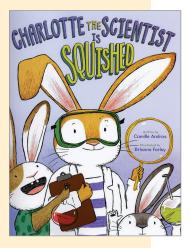


Advice Work Sample



Key Vocabulary:

- conquer
- hollered
- rule (verb)





- I can think about the actions the character took to solve a problem.
- I can use what I've learned from books to help me solve problems.

Consider Possible Solutions

Book Title: Charlotte the Scientist Is Squished (Andros, 2017)

About the Book: Charlotte, the bunny scientist, doesn't have enough room to do her experiments. To solve her problem, she employs the scientific method and engineers a carrot-shaped rocket to blast her into space. When she finds space too lonely, she concludes she just needs her own space and finds it inside her rocket next to the crowded house.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Plots with a clear problem and solution
- Characters who look for different ways to solve a problem

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

• Notice the Cover Illustration:

- What clues in Brianne Farley's cover illustration help you to know that Charlotte is a scientist?
- Think about the title, *Charlotte the Scientist Is Squished*. What might the book be about? Ask a friend what he or she thinks.

Set a Purpose: Being squished sounds like a problem. Let's read, ponder, and talk to find out how Charlotte solves the problem.

During Reading

- Charlotte was a serious scientist. page: How did Charlotte solve problems?
- *STEP 1: Ask a question.* page: Can you imagine how Charlotte is feeling about her problem? Do you ever feel that way? What can you do to calm yourself down when you're feeling angry or frustrated?
- Two-page spread where Charlotte is in space page: Have her feelings changed? How is she feeling now that she's alone? Do you like being alone? Why or why not?
- *Observations* page: Can you name other words (synonyms) that mean the same thing as the word splendid [excellent, great, outstanding, super, superb]?
- *And what was Charlotte supposed to do when she ran out of toilet paper?* page: Hmmm! It looks like Charlotte's mood is changing again. What's going on? What do you predict she'll do next?

After Reading

- What was Charlotte's big conclusion at the end of the story? [She needed her own space.]
- Do you ever feel like you need your own space? When do you feel that way? Where do you go?

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- Identify a problem that you have at home or at school. Think about how you might solve that problem. Explain your procedure step-by-step.
- In the back of the book, Charlotte has invited us to do our own experiment and e-mail her to tell her about it. Next time we do an experiment in science, we'll do that!

Other similar titles:

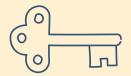


Leave Me Alone! (Brosgol, 2016)

About the Book: Graphic novelist, Vera Brosgol, won the 2017 Caldecott Honor for this, her first picture book. *Leave Me Alone!* is a combination of folktale and futuristic story. In it, an old woman, searching for somewhere to do her knitting, lands on the moon and travels through a worm hole. Her repeated plea, "Leave me alone!" is sure to be ringing in your students' ears after you read this book.

Lion and Tiger and Bear: Tag! You're It! (Long, 2016)

About the Book: Lion is painting a masterpiece in his "Alone Spot" when both Bear and Tiger disturb him by trying to get him to play tag. Even when Lion builds a fence around his easel, his friends still tag him. Finally, he convinces his friends to let him finish his painting and then they all play tag.

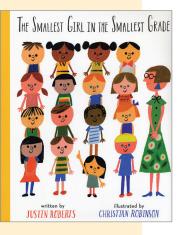


Key Vocabulary:

- essential
- splendid



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- I can think about the actions the character took to solve the problem or resolve the conflict.
- I can notice the impact that solution had on other characters.
- I can use my schema and clues from the text to infer the theme or big idea of a story.

Connect Problem, Solution, Impact, and Big Ideas

Book Title: The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade (Roberts, 2014)

About the Book: Sally McCabe notices everything, even the unkind behavior of the other children at her school. One day she's had enough and stands up for those who were bullied. Read this book at the beginning of the school year or later if/ when you observe children being bullied.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Plots with a clear conflict and resolution
- Characters who stand up to bullies

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

- Before we read, let's compare the way the kids' faces look on the cover to the way they look on the title page. [Robinson's colored-pencil illustrations clearly show the emotions of each of the children in "the smallest girl's" class—on the cover, they are all happy, on the title page some children are not being kind, so they look mean. Also, notice that "the smallest girl" is watching the unkind kids.] It looks like there are some unkind acts happening in her class.
- [If/when a child notices Sally with her finger up on the cover, ask, "Why do you think she is pointing her finger? Turn and talk to your neighbor about that."]

Set a Purpose: Let's read to find out more about the "Smallest Girl," what is happening at her school, and if that is the reason that she is pointing her finger up. I'm wondering if we can learn any lessons that might help us in our classroom.

During Reading

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- *Hardly anyone noticed young Sally McCabe.* page: What is happening on the playground? [Notice the unkind acts.] What do you think is the problem?
- *She said, "I'm tired of seeing this terrible stuff."* page: What does Sally do to try to solve the problem? Do you think it will work? [She tells her friends to stop hurting each other.]
- *The swings soon resumed their rhythm* ... page: What do you notice about the playground now? How is different from the playground at the beginning of the story? [Look back and forth between the two pages to compare.] Why do you suppose it is different? [Because Sally had the courage to stand up when she saw something bad happening.]

After Reading

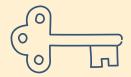
- How did Sally's actions impact her friends at school?
- What lesson can we learn from reading this book?

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- How can we use this understanding at our school?
- Does this book remind you of any other books we've read? How is it the same or different?

Extend the Experience:

- On this chart we'll record the problem (or conflict), solution (or resolution), the impact, and the big idea. Then, we can compare it to other books we read about bullying. (See example below.)
- Divide your paper in half. On one side draw and/or write about an unkind act you've seen happening at school. On the other side draw and/or write what you might say or do to stop an act like that from happening.



Key Vocabulary:

- attention
- notice
- transform

Other similar titles:

Peanut Butter and Jellyfish (Krosoczka, 2014)

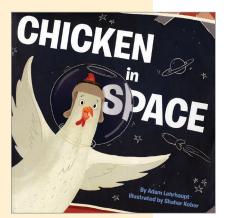
About the Book: Best friends, Peanut Butter and Jellyfish, are endlessly taunted by Crabby. One day, Crabby gets caught in a lobster trap. When the duo sets Crabby free, he apologizes for his behavior, and they all become friends.

Two of a Kind (Robbins, 2009)

About the Book: If you are looking for a book to spark a conversation about kindness and healthy friendships, this is the one! Kayla and Melanie are exclusive friends and known as "two of a kind." Julisa and Anna are also friends. When Melanie *befriends* Anna, Anna discovers that being friends with Kayla and Melanie means making choices that exclude her friend Julisa.

Themese and the second	What is the	CONFLICT (pro	blem)?		
Mean Jean is being rude, bossy and a bully	Crabby is yelling mean words all the time. He's	Kayla and Melanie don't let hids play, make fun of Julisa and are bossy to Anna	a lot of bullying		
How did they solve the problem? RESOLUTION					
Katie Sue asked	Peanut Butter and Jellyfish saved Gabby from the trap.	Anna chose to join her friend Julisa.	Sally said, "Stop!"		
How did the solution IMPACT others?					
Everybody is	They all became friends.		Kids are being nice, kind, and		
What is the BIG IDEA? (theme, moral, lesson)					
	Help friends when they're in trouble. Find new friends and play with them.	Ignore bullies and troublemakers they will only get you into trouble!	Stand up to bullies. Sav		

Conflict Chart





- I can notice how characters think and act.
- I can talk, write, or draw about how I can use what I've learned from this story in my own life.

Notice Characters' Mindsets

Book Title: Chicken in Space (Lehrhaupt, 2016)

About the Book: An adventurous, positive-thinking chicken is determined to travel to space. Although her mission doesn't go quite as expected, she's already planning the next one. This is the first book in a series.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters with an adventurous spirit
- Characters that overcomes obstacles to reach a goal

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

Notice the Cover Illustration:

- At first when you look at this cover you might think that this chicken is really in space, but look closely as I open the book to view the wrap-around illustration.
- What other details do you notice in Shahar Kober's illustration? Do you still think the chicken is in space? Where do you think she is?
- What is the setting for this story? If you look on the verso page [where you find the copyright information], it often says how the illustrations were created. This artist created the illustrations for the cover and the rest of the book digitally (that means on a device like a laptop or tablet).

Set a Purpose: Today, as we're enjoying this fun book, let's think about Zoey's attitude or mind set—how she approaches problems and challenges.

During Reading

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- *"Pip," said Zoey, "come to space with us."* page: What does Zoey mean when she says that it is not dangerous to go to space; rather, it's an adventure? What other adventures can you think of that might be a little dangerous?
- *"Not a problem!"* page: What does Zoey mean when she says that it is not a problem that she doesn't have a ship; rather, she looks at it as an opportunity? Have you ever had a problem that turned into a learning opportunity?
- *"Watch out for the birds!"* page: Wow! Zoey is really good at using her imagination. What did she imagine? [She imagined that the birds were alien attack ships.]

After Reading

• Is this book real or make-believe? Can you go back into the book to find proof to support your answer?

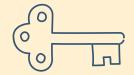
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Exhibit a Growth Mindset

• How did Zoey approach the problems or challenges she faced in the book? What lessons can we learn from her that we might use in our own lives [have a plan, use your imagination, go on adventures, view problems as opportunities, find your own way]?

Extend the Experience:

- Zoey stretched her brain by trying new things. What can you do or try to make your brain grow?
- What do you predict will be Zoey's next big adventure? Create your own version of the cover of the next book.



Key Vocabulary:

- adventure
- gathered
- impressed

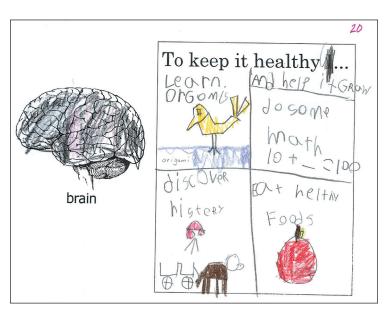
Other similar titles:

Chicken in School (Lehrhaupt, 2017)

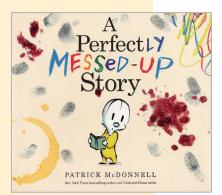
About the Book: Zoey the chicken is back in her second adventure. When Sam, the pig, says he wants to go to school, Zoey makes a plan, creates a classroom, and invites all her barnyard friends.

What Do You Do With an Idea? (Yamada, 2013)

About the Book: A child has an idea. At first, worried about what others might think, he hides the idea. Then, after giving the idea attention, he decides to show it to others. Even after hearing it is a waste of time, the child nurtures the idea and discovers that ideas change the world.



Helping Your Brain Grow Work Sample





- I can notice how characters think and act.
- I can learn how to think flexibly.
- I can talk, write, or draw about how I can use what I've learned from this story in my own life.

Learn to Think Flexibly

Book Title: A Perfectly Messed-Up Story (McDonnell, 2014)

About the Book: Louie is trying to tell his story when someone messes it up. In the end, he realizes that everything is just fine. This book is ideal for kids who need to be a bit more flexible in their thinking.

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters who are flexible thinkers
- Plots that encourage readers to learn from or celebrate problems and mistakes

Comprehension Conversation:

Before Reading

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Notice the Cover Illustration:

- Hmmm! It looks like there are some things on the cover that don't belong. What do you see?
- I noticed that Patrick McDonnell used a lot of different art tools to create his illustrations. Look carefully at the title. What do you notice?

Set a Purpose: Let's read to find out why this book is called *The Perfectly Messed-Up Story* instead of *The Perfect Story*. After reading, we'll think about the title and how it connects to what we can learn from the story.

Maria's Thinking: Young children, particularly students with special needs, find it a challenge to think flexibly or smoothly adjust when unexpected events occur or things don't go their way. Reading books like the three listed in this experience are ideal for introducing a flexible mindset. Then, as teachers, it is essential to model your reactions to unplanned occurrences throughout the year. For example, when a learning experience takes longer than the time you allotted, verbalize your flexible mindset by saying something like, "Oh! It looks like we ran out of time for [a particular activity]. Even though I really wanted you to finish, I'm going to have to be a flexible thinker and figure out what to do. My new plan is to stop and put everything away until first thing tomorrow morning. Does that make sense? Thanks for being flexible."

During Reading

- *Plop!* page: Uh-oh! What's happening to Louie's story? [Jelly and peanut butter have landed on the page.] How would that make you feel? How could Louie solve the problem?
- Orange juice! page: Can you imagine how Louie is feeling now?
- *AAAIIEEEE* . . . page: Look at Louie's face and body language. Can you figure out how he is feeling now? Let's go back and compare the orange juice page to this page. On which page are Louie's feelings more intense? Would you use different words to describe his feelings? Why?
- *This is Louie's story. Who cares.* page: What are some words you might use to describe Louie's mood now [defeated, crushed, miserable, depressed, gloomy, and so on]?

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Exhibit a Growth Mindset

After Reading

- How did Louie's attitude change at the end of the story? What happened to make it change? [He realized that even though things were messed up, his story was fine. He changed his thinking (his mindset).]
- Talk about the title *The Perfectly Messed-Up Story*. What do you think Patrick McDonnell is trying to tell us? [It's okay to mess up, messy stories can still be *perfect*.] [This book can also open a conversation about the concept of *perfect*. Is anything ever perfect?]

Extend the Experience:

- Let's write down some of the flexible thoughts Louie has in this book. [Co-create a flexible thinking anchor chart with your students using some of Louie's quotes like "Everything IS fine." "Nothing is going to stop ME!" Add to these as you read other books about flexible thinking throughout the year.]
- Pick a flexible thought that you want to work on this quarter. Write it on this index card. We'll put the index card in a special place to remind you to use that thinking when you have a problem or make a mistake.

Other similar titles:

The Book of Mistakes (Luyken, 2017)

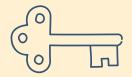
About the Book: In this celebration of mistakes, readers watch as page by page the artist draws a girl and makes mistakes. Then, by adding a detail such as eyeglasses or a fancy collar, she fixes them up. It continues as the illustrator adds items that are both mistakes and revisions until readers see a fantastical scene that leads to the beginning of another drawing.

What Do You Do With a Problem? (Yamada, 2016)

About the Book: The creators of What Do You Do with an Idea? (Yamada, 2013), share the story of a child with a problem that won't go away. After worrying and avoiding it, the child finally tackles the problem. In doing this, he learns that his problem held an opportunity for something good.



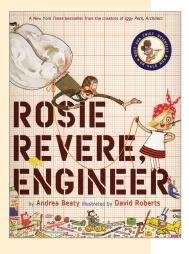
Flexible Thoughts Chart



Key Vocabulary:

- awful
- inspire
- merrily

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- I can notice how characters think and act.
- I can look for new and different ways to solve problems.
- I can keep working even when something doesn't go well.

Learn to Problem Solve and Persevere

Book Title: Rosie Revere, Engineer (Beaty, 2013)

About the Book: Rosie Revere "dreamed of becoming a great engineer" until her uncle laughed at her latest invention. Fortunately, her great-great aunt Rose came to her rescue and helped her to see that "the only true failure can come if you quit."

To find a book like this one, look for the following:

- Characters who persevere
- Characters who think *outside of the box*

Comprehension Conversation:



0

Notice the Cover Illustration:

- I'll open the book so we can look carefully at the wrap-around cover. David Roberts used pen, ink, and watercolor paints to draw a lot of things on this cover. What do you see? [If you are able to take off the book jacket your students can see more objects on the book case.]
- Think about the title, *Rosie Revere, Engineer*. Does anyone know what an engineer does? This kind of engineer does not drive a train; this engineer is a person who makes plans to build things like bridges, buildings, or machines. Engineers try to figure out how and why things work, they solve problems, and they create new things or improve old ones. Now that you know what an engineer does, what do you think Rosie is going to do with all of that stuff?

Set a Purpose: Today, while you're listening to this story, I want you to notice how Rosie thinks and acts. I'm wondering if we can learn anything from her to use in our work at school and at home.

During Reading

- *And when it was finished, young Rosie* . . . page: How did Uncle Fred make Rosie feel [embarrassed, perplexed, and dismayed]? [If needed, take a moment to define those words for your students.] What do you think she's going to do next?
- *Then Rosie heard laughter* . . . page: Oh no! Rosie's aunt is laughing at her too. Turn and talk with your neighbor about that.
- *"Your brilliant first flop was a raging success!"* page: What does Rosie's aunt mean when she says, "The only true failure can come if you quit?" [You can learn a lot from mistakes and you will make or do things better the next time you try. But, if you just give up, then you don't get a chance to use what you've learned.]
- With each perfect failure, they all stand and cheer. page: I'm going to turn to the copyright page to see why Rosie is so proud. [Her aunt is flying in the new "heli-o-cheese-copter" she made.] Why do you think Rosie feels proud? [She didn't give up, she finally made a flying vehicle for her aunt.]

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Exhibit a Growth Mindset

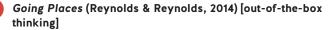
After Reading

- How many of you use your eraser when you're writing or drawing? What would happen if you just gave up every time you had to erase? Have any of you learned to ride your bike without training wheels, tie your shoes, or do something else that has taken a lot of tries? When you don't give up, that is called perseverance. Do you think Rosie had perseverance? Share your thinking with your neighbor.
- To strengthen students' concept of opinion, you might choose to occasionally have students rate the book either using fingers or stars on paper. (See example below.)

Extend the Experience:

- What did Rosie learn about being an engineer? What are some of the *engineering* actions you noticed Rosie do that you might use to solve problems? [She built things, made inventions, worked hard, tried out her inventions, drew plans, kept trying, and looked for new ways to make things.]
- Draw a picture of an invention you want to create and write to tell us what it will do.

Other similar titles:



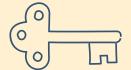
About the Book: The "Going Places" contest is underway and Rafael wants to win. So, he builds his go-cart to the exact specifications. Then, he notices that Maya has taken a different approach. Together, they create their own unique vehicle.

The Most Magnificent Thing (Spires, 2014) [characters who persevere]

About the Book: A little girl has a "wonderful idea," she and her canine assistant are going to make "the most magnificent thing." Although she knows exactly what it is going to look like and how it is going to work, she is unable to get it just right. After many attempts, she gets frustrated and gives up. Then they take a walk to calm down, and she is able to regroup and create a nearperfect magnificent thing.



Rate the Book Work Sample



Key Vocabulary:

- embarrassed
- failure
- invention

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