



ABC Book of Teaching the Virtues

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Preface

- * I was motivated to choose the topic of Virtues for my ABC Book, mainly because I witnessed a successful implementation in my kindergarten practicum. My S.A. wove virtues and social and emotional learning into everything she did. The children LOVED it. My S.A. held a daily gratitude circle. Students gave compliments using virtues for Student of the Week and often, the children were able to use the vocabulary in a meaningful and correct way, providing perfect examples of virtues. All the kids knew about 'positive self talk', which was one of their writing strategies. I continued these routines throughout my full practicum and found these activities impactful and astounding.
- * After my 405 experience, I wanted to investigate and find more resources for my own practice. The focus of the book is for early primary, but the activities can be extended for immediate students. Many ideas in this book comes from my PDP journey. They come from my 401/402 practicum in India working with Tibetan refugees, who epitomizes the many virtues listed in this book, my 405 practicum at Lord Nelson Elementary with my mentor Denise Burke (who has just retired this June), and my passionate cross-curricular instructors during 404. More importantly, my own daughters (Fiona, 11 and Margot, almost 14), inspire a lot of these ideas. My girls trigger many memories of reading these titles when they were young and they own a lot of these wonderful read aloud books. Collectively, all of this influenced and helped solidify this ABC Book

Assertiveness

“Never be afraid to raise your voice for honesty and truth and compassion against injustice and lying and greed. If people all over the world . . . would do this, it would change the earth.”

William Faulkner

- * **Purpose:** Being assertive is when you are positive and confident about who you are, about your thoughts, and you are able to stand up for both yourself, as well as others. Students need to learn to be assertive in a non-aggressive way, so that they are able to tell others what they think and need in a tactful manner. Teachers need to cultivate this virtue so students can learn to think independently, do what is right and not cave to peer pressures. It is essential all children are free to develop a unique individual voice.
- * **Lesson:** Students across the Lower Mainland celebrate Pink Day or Acceptance Day. It was first started by two Nova Scotia teens who stood up for a Grade 9 student being bullied for wearing a pink shirt. To demonstrate their support, these two boys bought 50 pink t-shirts to share and wear the next day at school. They received a great deal of publicity and support for standing up to a bully, showing altruism, and a desire to make a change in their school. Students learn about David Shepherd and Travis Price through a Daily Letter (Genre: Non-fiction) and do Pair, Share reading. They can also watch a short interview clip with the two students. <http://www.nbcnews.com/video/nightly-news/21155376#21155376>
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Listening and speaking - Students Think, Pair, Share their own experiences; they imagine what they would do if they saw a classmate being bullied for something they were wearing.
 - Placemat - In groups of 4, students imagine themselves in a situation where someone is being bullied. They take on roles as the bully, the bullied, the bystander and the intervener. Each student imagines and discusses why they would act the way they do, how they must feel and what exactly they would say. Groups present an improv role play to the rest of the class.
 - Anti-bully Messages - Students write messages/slogans about anti-bullying on pink cardboard t-shirts to hang in the hallway of the school E.g. ‘Stop Bullying!’, ‘ Stop hate and be friendly.’ etc.
 - Students participate in annual flash mob dance at a Vancouver Giant’s game in conjunction with thousands of other Lower Mainland students. As a school, all students practice the dance routine with Grade 7 role models leading the dance. They practice at least once a week (for a few months) prior to the big day. It’s a huge event that promotes community within the school and across the city.

Bravery

“Those who have courage and faith shall never perish in misery.”

Anne Frank

- * **Purpose:** Bravery and courage requires students to face their fears, even when it seems impossible or really scary. For some young children (and some adults) it is hard to try new things. Bravery is doing what feels right, even when others do not believe in you.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *The Little Yellow Leaf* by Carin Berger. Theme: facing fears and taking risks, autumn, friendship. Grade Levels: k-2. During the fall, a little yellow leaf does not want to let go of its tree. Even when the frost arrives, it is not ready to fall. It builds up its courage when there is one other leaf in the same position. The collage art is simple and beautiful. The writing is descriptive and poetic. Remind students that good readers look at the pictures to make meaning of the text. As the teacher reads the story, students visualize the events, the leaf, the surroundings, and the feelings the story evokes.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Senses Poetry - Students brainstorm words that describe leaves and autumn using their five senses. They write their poem with I see, I hear, I taste, I smell, and I feel prompts.
 - Nature walk and Adopt a tree - Students visit and adopt a local tree; they observe the changes through the different seasons. They can document the changes closely, by observing, drawing, and writing about the different parts of the tree or the changes.
 - What does bravery look like? Poster - In small groups, of 4, students create a poster of bravery in action (using images and words). They title it “Bravery is . . . “
 - Other resources: *Malala, a Brave Girl from Pakistan* / *Iqbal, a Brave Boy from Pakistan* by Jeanette Winter, *Swimmy* by Leo Lionni

Compassion

“Teach this triple truth to all: a generous heart, kind speech,
and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity.”

Buddha

- * **Purpose:** Compassion is caring and understanding other peoples feelings or well-being. It starts with noticing others when they are hurt or sad and expressing concern. It is learning how to let someone know you want to help. Students learn that compassion can be for an animal or a person.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Sam and the Lucky Money* by Karen Chinn. Theme: compassion, thankfulness, generosity, hunger and poverty, community, Lunar New Year. Grade Levels: k-2. Sam receives ‘lucky money’ for Chinese New Year. He is disappointed when he realizes that it won’t buy as much as he had hoped. He encounters an elderly man with no shoes on the street, in the middle of winter, He makes an important independent decision with what to do with the money.
- * **Questions:** How does Sam feel when he steps on the man's bare feet? What happens when you are at the store with your mom or dad and you don't get what you want? Sam decides how to spend his \$4, how does he feel about his decision? How does Sam's family feel? What do you think of Sam's choice? What kinds of things can you do to help those who have less than you?
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Community service - Students Think, Pair, Share how they can make a positive change within their community. The class takes a vote on how they want to help; the students design and execute a plan to help others (e.g. donate old clothes, toys or books to charity, collect for food bank, family hampers). The teacher may guide the process by asking W-5 questions (e.g. What shall we do? Who will bring what and when?). Students provide answers, create and execute the plan. It is also very important to share ideas with parents to gain support.
 - Blue Sky Service Activity - Teacher conducts a visualization exercise for students to imagine a better world. They think about what could be done to make our world better. This could be a structured or guided inquiry unit of multiple weeks or possibly months (likely in the 2nd or 3rd term). The depth of the project would depend on the students’ passions. Some possible ideas are: how can we produce less waste, what can we do to promote healthier children, how do to save water, etc.

Determination

“I want to try the impossible, to show it can be done.”

Terry Fox

- * **Purpose:** Determination is sticking with something until it is finished, even if it's difficult. Children learn to use their will power to accomplish tasks, accept challenges and not give up. When students see improvement from their hard work, it will help them persevere. A positive approach will also help students conquer difficult challenges.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *The Most Magnificent Thing* by Ashley Spires. Theme: determination, perseverance, creativity, it's okay to make mistakes, S.T.E.M. Grade Levels: k-2. An unnamed girl and her best friend (a dog) has a wonderful idea to make a magnificent thing. It was not as easy as she had hoped and tries and tries again. The story shows her frustrations and how she deals with anger.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Free verse writing with a focus on Word Choice trait (using exact language) - First, students free write and describe a personal experience. Possible ideas could be when they felt frustration or anger *or* when they had to use positive thinking to change their behaviour *or* they write about a character they respect because of their perseverance and commitment. Next, students, in pairs, examine the powerful verbs used in the story - the girl doesn't just “make” her magnificent thing, she “tinkers and hammers and measures,” she “smoothes and wrenches and fiddles,” she “twists and tweaks and fastens.” Finally, students review their original writing and reassess their action words to show rather than tell and ensure the words are active.
 - Mantras to build Positive Self Talk (promote a ‘I CAN’ mentality) - Hand out written negative phrases people use to put themselves down (students can think of their own). In pairs, students, write an alternative sentence that helps them think more positively (e.g. Instead of “I give up!”, students will say “I will use some of the strategies I’ve learned in class.” or “I’m not good at this.”, students will think “What else can I do?” Create an anchor chart to share student’s ideas.
 - Other resources: *So Few of Me* by Peter H. Reynolds, *Wilma Unlimited* by Kathleen Krull, *Terry Fox, A Story of Hope* by Maxine Trottier

Empathy

“You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.”

Harper Lee - *To Kill a Mockingbird*

- * **Purpose:** Showing empathy is an important part of being a good friend and getting along with others. It means you can think about and understand how others feel, without actually experiencing the same experiences. You can imagine what it must be like to be in someone else's shoes.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *From Far Away* by Robert Munsch. Theme: empathy, refugees, war, immigration Grade Levels: k-2. Children are introduced to the concept war and refugees. This true story centres around a young girl named Saoussan who arrived to Canada from war-torn Lebanon. This is her story of what it was like to arrive to a new country and new school, and not understanding the culture or speaking the language. Robert Munsch wrote this book based on their correspondence.
- * **Questions:** If you were Saoussan, how would you feel? What does it mean to put yourself in someone else's shoes? Have you ever been to another country where you didn't understand the language? How did you feel? What is your family history? Do you have a story of how your family came to Canada?
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Vocabulary on feelings - Use *In my heart, a book of feelings* by Jo Witek to reinforce and build a language for emotions. In small groups of 3 or 4, students find the feelings in the book and what causes the emotions. They identify metaphorical language and create their own metaphors for emotions to share with the class. E.g. “Sometimes my heart feels like a big yellow star, shiny and bright . . .”
 - Mini-lesson on Effective Listening - Teacher and volunteer student models situation through a role play. Demonstrate how to paraphrase, validate and show other person you can relate and understand. E.g. “Yes, sometimes I feel sad too, when I have no one to play with at recess.”
 - Creative drama - Students work together in pairs or small groups. Provide each group with a scenario prompt (or they can come up with their own idea) and ask the group to perform an improvisation performance for the class. They can act out two interactions - one where there is empathy and one without. Have students get deep into character. E.g. a student misses penalty kick in soccer game; two kids are playing blocks but they don't want another student to join, etc.

Friendship

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson

- * **Purpose:** Humans are social creatures. Understanding friendship is an important part of social and emotional development and a joyful part of life. Friendship can mean different things to different people. Students explore the different ways to start friendships, how to be friendly to strangers, what it feels like to have a friend and understand what it means to be a good friend. Conversations around inclusiveness and cliques may also arise from this topic.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *farfallina & marcel* by Holly Keller. Theme: friendship, spring, butterflies. Grade Levels: k-1. Children are introduced to the concept that everything in life changes. This story centres around a young gosling named Marcel and his friend the caterpillar Farfallina. They did everything together until every thing started to change. This is a fantastic resource that has a cross curricular component to metamorphosis and Science
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Sequencing (Mix it up) - Students, in small groups re-sequence the events of the story through pictures or key events to reinforce the Organization Trait of writing.
 - Simile Poetry - Students write poems about friendship and make comparisons. E.g. *Friendship is like a . . .* butterfly coming out of a cocoon; a rainbow with many colours, etc.
 - Show me, don't tell me - In pairs, students take a telling statement about friendship e.g. 'My Friends are Nice.' and brainstorm details about their idea. Individually, they change the telling statement and rewrite it into a showing statement with interesting details.
 - Other resources: *The Adventures of Beekle*, *The Unimaginary Friend* by Dan Santat, *Wombat Divine* by Mem Fox, *The Lion and the Little Red Bird* by Elisa Kleven

Gratitude

“When you practice gratefulness, there is a sense of respect towards others.”
The Dalai Lama

- * **Purpose:** A gratitude circle is reminiscent of an Aboriginal type of talking circle. It is a respectful approach to talking and sharing, providing an interconnectedness where everyone has their turn to speak and all voices are heard in an attentive way. A gratitude circle can take place to begin or to end the day. It can be done for all ages, as a reminder to us all that we have to be thankful for. Cultivating an ‘attitude of gratitude’ in the classroom encourages appreciation, calmness, slowness, speaking from the heart and friendly relationships.
- * **Lesson:** Students and teacher form a circle. They can sit or stand. Each person has their hands clasped in front of them, fingers laced together to create a gratitude ‘basket’. Each person shares one thing that he or she is grateful for. Examples from kindergarten students may be “Friends”, “Family”, “Nature”, “My teacher”. If they wish to pass, students can say pass.
- * **Optional activities**
 - * Students in grades 2 & 3 may be more expressive and share what they are grateful for, as well as **why** they are grateful
 - * Include a gratitude rock or special object to be passed around
 - * Gratitude circle can be done together with e.g. buddy class to end time together
 - * Gratitude Journal - write weekly entries about what they appreciate and why
 - * Gratitude Wall - cultivate an ‘attitude of gratitude’ within the school community where all students, staff and parents can participate

Honesty

“No legacy is so rich as honesty.”

William Shakespeare

- * **Purpose:** Being honest is being reliable, trustworthy and truthful. When students are honest, they will hopefully not lie, cheat or steal (or at least be honest enough to confess). Honesty is telling the truth and keeping your word. To encourage honesty, discuss with students about admitting to mistakes and positive outcomes of honesty rather than only negative consequences.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Edwurd Fudwupper Fibbed Big* by Berkeley Breathed. Themes: honesty, consequences, siblings. Grade Levels: K-3. Fanny Fudwupper's big brother, Edwurd spends his time making up outrageous stories, until one fib gets him into BIG trouble. The author is also the writer/illustrator of cartoon, *Bloom County*. The rhyme and meter in this story makes it a fun and silly read aloud. Compare different types of lies - white lies, exaggerations, broken promises, etc. and have students, in small groups consider how they would act in real-life situations. Set up carousel with scenarios and guiding questions. After rotating through, students share out with the class.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Rhyme and meter - Teacher re-reads story and students identify rhyming pairs. Students create their own rhymes using various patterns AABB, ABAB, etc. They can also use clapping to practice musical sequences. Other excellent rhyming resources include *Chica Chica Boom Boom* by Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault and *Each Peach Pear Plum* by Allen and Janet Ahlberg.
 - Alliteration poems - This story also highlights relationships between siblings. After further discussions about family and siblings, students write rhyming phrases about their sibling, family member or pet. E.g. Sarah's silly song sent her seven sisters to sleep.
 - Comic Strip - Students read some *Bloom County* comic strips and then create their own comic about fibs and lies.

Integrity

“The time is always right to do what is right.”

Martin Luther King Jr.

- * **Purpose:** Integrity is doing the right thing even when no one is looking. It is being aware of the choices we make and being accountable for our decisions. Integrity requires practice, nurturing and internal honesty.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Horton Hatches the Egg* by Dr. Seuss. Themes: integrity, keeping promises, responsibility. Grade Levels: k-2. A lazy bird named Mayzie asks Horton, the elephant, to hatch her egg. Horton doesn't like being stuck with this job for close to a year, but “An elephant's faithful, One hundred per cent!”
- * **Questions:** Why did Mayzie ask Horton to stay on her nest? How is Mayzie and Horton similar or different? What would you do if a Mayzie asked you to sit on her egg? Why do you think Horton stayed? Have you ever been in a situation where you knew you were doing the right thing but others made fun of you?
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Elephant-bird - Students write a narrative about their special combination animal and create a crazy creature flip book.
 - The read aloud can be connected to the hatching of chicken eggs in class or an entire Science unit around eggs. It can reinforce another virtue of Responsibility and taking care of the eggs and chicks.
 - Other resources: *The Art Lesson* by Tomie Depaola, *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman

J

ustice

“Whenever one person stands up and says, “Wait a minute, this is wrong,” it helps other people to do the same.
Gloria Steinem

- * **Purpose:** Justice is being fair in everything you do and treating everyone equally with respect and honesty. It’s an important value for children so they recognize injustice in the world and is able to stand up for what is right.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins. Themes: sharing and taking turns, problem solving, friendships Grade Levels: K-2. This is an excellent resource for math concept of division. Mom makes a dozen cookies for Victoria and Sam, but the doorbell rings and rings again and the cookies are shared.
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Bake cookies - In groups of 5 or 6, students follow a recipe and make one dozen cookies. In their groups, students work out the number of cookies that remain after each ring of the doorbell. *Extension:* What would happen if there were double or half the number of cookies or students?
 - Other resources: *It’s My Turn* by David Bedford and Elaine Field; *The Greedy Python* by Richard Buckley; *Alexander Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday* by Judith Viorst
 - This link provides a calendar of 21 assemblies for primary schools and good resources for UN Convention on the Rights of the Child https://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Education-Documents/Resources-Documents/primary_assemblies_unicef.pdf

Kindness

“No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted.”

Aesop

- * **Purpose:** Kindness is showing others that you care by saying or doing something good for others. Teaching kindness should reduce bullying and encourage support for other people, animals and our world.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes. Themes: friendship, family, bullying. Grade Levels: k-2. Chrysanthemum loves her name, until the first day of school when she is teased by a trio of mean girls. It is only when students go to music class and Mrs. Twinkle reveals her own long, flower-based name - Delphinium that Chrysanthemum feels better. During the story, students pass around a large, red tissue paper heart and every time one of the characters is mean to Chrysanthemum, a student crinkles up the heart. At the end of the story, the students try to flatten the crinkled heart. Teacher correlates that no matter how hard we try (even if we apologize), it is hard to fix a broken heart.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Feeling Synonyms and Antonyms - In the story, Chrysanthemum’s mother says “Your name is beautiful.” Her father adds, “And precious and priceless and fascinating and winsome.” In pairs, students create feeling posters with synonyms and antonyms. E.g. Happy - joyful, glad, cheerful, content, great, excited; Sad - down, gloom, unhappy, depressed, miserable. Students can share with the class and enter new language in the back of their writing books (personal dictionaries/thesaurus). Students can also add to these posters throughout the term, sharing their new words with classmates.
 - Body Language - Students can discuss body language associated with certain emotions. In small groups, students can create a feelings dance.
 - Class book - On their own, students write descriptive paragraphs telling their story of when they once felt an emotion. With an invitation to write, some students may want to create their own book with personal accounts of feelings. Students can also use online Book Creator for iPad.
 - A mini-lesson on Conventions trait of writing - Focus on the capitalization of names (and uniqueness of names) via a poem: “Everybody Has a Name” by Jean Warren

Everybody has a name. Some are different, some the same. Some are short, some are long. All are right, none are wrong. My name is _____.
It’s special to me. It’s exactly who I want to be.
 - Name Acrostic Poetry - Students write their first name and then a descriptive adjective that starts with each letter of their name. Students can also write acrostic poems about seasons, nature, friends, etc.

Love

“A world without love would be no world.”
Goethe

- * **Purpose:** Love is caring for someone, making them feel special and wanting to be near them. Sharing is a way of showing love. People can share their belongings, time and themselves.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *The Giving Tree* by Shel Silverstein. Themes: love, generosity, the environment Grade Levels: k-2. This is a wonderful touching journey between a boy and a tree. The tree gives unconditionally while the boy takes incessantly.
- * **Questions:** How does the tree feel about the boy? Do you think the boy loved the tree? Is the love for each other the same? When you love someone, how do you treat them? Do you treat people you love differently from others that you don't?
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Sequencing (Putting it in order) - Class retell the story with first student telling the beginning, then a second student telling the end. Volunteers present the middle parts of the story by coming up to the front of the class one at a time, standing in a logical place within the line. This activity helps students practice the Organization trait of writing.
 - Creative drama - Students retell the story through movement and facial expression or gestures. Have students create an entire performance that includes dance and music. Characters can be boy, tree, apples, branches, leaves etc. Invite another class to be your audience or integrate show to be performed during a spring concert.
 - What is love? Poem - Students write their free verse poem 'Love is . . . '

Mindfulness

“Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.”
Jon Kabat-Zinn

- * **Purpose:** With anxiety on the increase, a daily practice of mindfulness will help students relax, hone their attention and have better concentration. Taking 5 minutes few times every day to selectively focus and do some mindful breathing exercises, yoga or mediation to centre themselves, should help students feel more grounded. It may be difficult for some students at first, but this practice will give children an outlet to pause and give their brains a break.
- * **Lesson:** Introduce the topic of mindfulness early in the school year. Ask students how they relax or what they do when they feel angry or frustrated. Show Students a four minute film, about how a group of kindergarten children cope with difficult emotions through breathing techniques and meditation. The film is completely unscripted and is a good introduction to the MindUp curriculum of breathing and listening to a chime. Students watch and listen for 2 favourite points to share with the group. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVA2N6tX2cg>
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Students discuss when they might feel angry or frustrated and the different ways they handle these difficult feelings. Teacher draws connections back to the film, and facilitate a discussion on the benefits of mindfulness, healthy eating, and exercise on our brains and bodies.
 - “Mindfulness and the art of eating a chocolate bar” from <http://www.meditationinschools.org/resources/> : Facilitate a slow guided observation of a chocolate bar (or donut, ice-cream, piece of pineapple) and speak in a calm, purposeful way to direct the students to think about their chocolate bar. Afterwards, students practice descriptive powers by painting a picture of their chocolate bar using Word Choice trait (describing the details and what is unusual).
 - Make mindfulness a habit. Rotate students to lead daily breathing or yoga exercises.
 - Other resources: *Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda* by Lauren Alderfer, *Take the Time: Mindfulness for Kids* by Maud Roegiers, *Peaceful Piggy Meditation* by Kerry Lee MacClean
 - For fun, students discuss this clip from Kung Fu Panda - “Yesterday is history, tomorrow its a mystery and today its a gift . . . that’s why it’s called the present.” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7BwWNMFJwE>

Nice

“A smile is something you can’t give away; it always comes back to you”

Maya Angelou

- * **Purpose:** Most parents want their children to do well in school and to be happy. However, cultivating empathetic and compassionate children requires us to make *níceness* a priority by giving students opportunities to appreciate and practice caring and gratitude. Students have to learn to extend this kindness outside their family or close friends.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *The Smile that went Around the World* by Patrice Karst. Themes: a smile is infectious, spreading kindness Grade Levels: k-2. One smile and kind gesture from Justin, leads to another and another, and the contagious smile travels around the world. Highlight for students the domino effect of being kind to others.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Random acts of kindness chain - Every student in the class decides on two kind acts to share with two people. Each receiver then also pays the kindness forward by doing two kind acts for two other people. Every act of kindness is written on a strip of paper to make a chain to hang in the school. This project can extend to entire school and into the community. <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org>
 - Kindness Posters - Students brainstorm different ways to share kindness in the classroom, at home, at school and in the community.
 - Other resources: *If Everyone Did* by Jo Ann Stover about consequences and the power of our actions (both positive and negative), *Each Kindness* by Jacqueline Woodson, *Zero* by Kathryn Otoshi, *The Nice Book* by David Ezra Stein

O penness

“The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size.”

Albert Einstein

- * **Purpose:** Openness is keeping our minds and hearts open to new experiences, ideas and friendships. It is being honest and sincere. It can be risky because we are trying something new and unfamiliar, but at the same time, it teaches students to stretch their abilities and develop a growth mindset.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Creatrilogy (Dot, Ish, Sky Color)* by Peter H. Reynolds. Themes: creativity, imagination, individuality, trying
Grade Levels: k-2. All three books inspire the artist in every child to persevere. The teacher’s encouraging words, “just make a mark and see where it takes you.” can be a similar conversation starter for students that say “I can’t draw, I can’t do math, I can’t run. . . .” Teachers can slowly help adjust a fixed mindset to a growth mindset, where students begin to think “I can’t draw **yet**. I can’t do that kind of math **yet**. I can’t run twice around the field **yet**.”
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Jigsaw reading - Students in groups re-read one of the three stories. They create mind maps about either Vashti, Ramon, and Marisol - what does each character say, do, feel and think. As a class, students draw connections and find similar themes in all three books.
 - Useful classroom guides for all three books: http://www.candlewick.com/book_files/0763619612.btg.1.pdf and http://www.candlewick.com/book_files/0763623458.kit.1.pdf
 - Carol Dweck’s TED talk explains that students can grow or improve their abilities based on effort. The focus of learning needs to move from the product to the process. For teachers to learn more about the growth mindset, watch https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve?language=en and read *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* by Carol S. Dweck

Patience

“The two most powerful warriors are patience and time.”

Leo Tolstoy

- * **Purpose:** Patience teaches the value of delaying gratification even when you want something now. It can students help develop the ability to think through and resolve problems. Patience is waiting, being calm and learning to self-regulate.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox. Themes: patience, empathy, connecting generations, friendship. Grade Levels: k-3. Wilfred is a young boy who lives next door to an senior's home. He likes visiting with the older people, but in particular he likes Miss Nancy, who has lost her memory. Wilfred learns about memories and attempts to help Miss Nancy find hers.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Share a memory - Students bring an object that is linked to a favourite memory or story. They share with other students their special memory. This could lead to writing about a family treasure or a favourite memory.
 - Personal timeline (Genre: autobiography) - Students practice sequencing by outlining important life events (day of birth, starting school, moving to a new city, etc.). They list events whether big or small, decide which has more importance and which to include in their story. Younger students can illustrate these milestones and use a string and clothes pegs to help with the Organizational trait of thinking and writing.
 - Time capsule (class or school project) - Students create their own capsule to share with future generations. They learn about capsules from previous generations (e.g. Vancouver's long lost Golden Jubilee capsule) and decide what they want to include in their own. http://www.vancouver-historical-society.ca/capsule_photos.htm
 - Interviews - Students visit a local old age home. Before their visit, they think about questions to ask and things they want to know about the past or resident. Relationships flourish and this could become a weekly connection where both groups benefit. The child and resident can read to one another, do crafts together and build friendships. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/kindergarten-in-a-retirement-home-proves-a-hit-with-young-and-old/article4103165/>

Quality

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”
Aristotle

- * **Purpose:** Quality is doing your best. It is giving your very best to anything you do and not do things half heartedly. It is about developing a strong work ethic that teaches students to be diligent and taking initiative.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *The Little Red Hen* by Carol Ottolenghi. Themes: diligence, excellence, friendship. Grade Levels: k-3. This old folk tale is about how hard work pays off for a little red hen, in comparison to her lazy friends.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Guided Reading Table - Students are separated based on ability. They read *Fables* by Arnold Lobel, a collection of 20, one page fables that are appropriate for early primary readers or *Anno's Aesop: A Book of Fables by Aesop and Mr. Fox* by Anno Mitsumasa or Aesop's fables from http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/schoolradio/subjects/english/aesops_fables/I-8/fox_crow
 - Reader's theatre - Students practice retelling their fables to other groups through a performance of their story.
 - Write a fable- Students in groups can create their own story based on a fable they've read.
 - Other resources: *Teaching with Aesop's Fables* by Theda Detlor

Respect

“For to be free is not merely to cast off one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.”

Nelson Mandela

- * **Purpose:** Respect is treating others the way you want to be treated. It involves patience, politeness and showing concern for all life. Lessons could revolve around learning the meaning and value of self-respect, respect for others, animals, property and environment.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Hey, Little Ant* by Phillip M. Hoose Themes: respect, empathy, compassion, peer pressure. Grade Levels: k-2 This story is a dialogue between a kid and an ant. The story ends with a question, “What do you think that kid should do?” Should the ant be squished or should it go free? Students think independently and write their own ending. They discuss in small groups and come to a consensus on how to resolve the story. Students must persuade others of their reasoning.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Recipe for Respect - Students look at some traditional recipes. In pairs they brainstorm what respect looks and sounds like. They collaborate and write a recipe for respect that includes ingredients and directions. Focus of writing is on the Voice trait and a creative writing style that speaks to the reader on an emotional level.
 - Reader’s Theatre - In pairs, students work together to read the dialogue between the boy and the ant using their voice, facial expressions, body language and gestures. Students focus on reading with expression using appropriate rate, pitch, tone and volume. Students can informally perform their dialogue for the rest of the class. They can also improvise and add their own ideas into the dialogue.
 - Narrative - Students write as if they were the ant or the boy. They write their own interpretation of the story ending.
 - Point of view - Conservation International films from perspective of nature, ocean, water, redwoods, rainforest etc. Narrated by famous actors, they are beautifully written and presented. The theme is that ‘nature doesn’t need people, people need nature’. An excellent resource to introduce Word Choice trait and Science. <http://natureisspeaking.org>
 - Other resources: <http://www.peta.org/teachkind/lesson-plans-activities/free-materials/>, *Manners* by Alikei, *The Great Kapok Tree: A Tale of the Amazon Rain Forest* by Lynne Cherry, *Miss Nelson is Missing!* by James Marshall

Self Esteem

“Today you are YOU, that is TRUER than true. There is NO ONE alive who is YOUER than YOU!”
Dr. Seuss - *Happy Birthday to You!*

- * **Purpose:** Self-esteem plays a big part in how students feel about themselves and how much they enjoy or worry about things. It's about having a healthy and positive self-image that helps students approach change in a confident manner. A positive self-esteem allows students to feel proud of their accomplishments and abilities.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *The Important Book* by Margaret Wise Brown. Themes: understanding self and others, patterned text. Grade Levels: k-2 This simple, delightful story has a patterned format that primary students can easily follow. Students contemplate and decide what is the most important thing.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Class Important Book - Students work in pairs interviewing their partners. They create a similar paragraph and portrait about their partner using *The Important Book* format. "The important thing about *John* is that _____ . . . But the most important thing about *John* is _____." Students will focus on the Ideas trait of writing by concentrating on ideas development and providing interesting details about their partner. Other ideas: http://www.writingfix.com/Picture_Book_Prompts/ImportantBook3.htm
 - Paying compliments - This can be done orally or written. Start a compliment wall and have students write sincere compliments about their classmates (One of the things I like about John is _____, Sara, thank you for _____, You are a great friend Susan because _____, I noticed Scott showed compassion when _____, etc.). Develop a class routine where the class gives, for example the Student of the Week verbal compliments.
 - All About Me unit - Students create a personalized book about themselves. They write about their personal history, learning experiences, favourite things and future ambitions. Students explore what makes them unique and teacher holds writing conferences with all students. Additionally, students can also create a life-size self-portrait.
 - Other resources: *I Believe in Me: A Book of Affirmations* by Connie Bowen, *I Think, I Am!: Teaching Kids the Power of Affirmations* by Louise Hay, *Only One You* by Linda Kranz

Tolerance

“...practice tolerance and live together as good neighbours.”
United Nations Charter

- * **Purpose:** Practicing tolerance is to show respect and appreciation for differences. Students will know that others may think, look, speak or act differently from them, but that everyone has feelings and dreams and it's okay to be different. The goal of teaching children tolerance is so we have citizens that are non-judgemental and open to diversity. Teaching tolerance in a classroom provide the best hope for developing a society free from racism, sexism, and social inequality.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *It's Okay to Feel Different* by Todd Parr. Themes: diversity, tolerance. Grade Levels: k-2 The beginning of the school year is an exciting time for students, especially for kindergarteners. This book helps students understand that differences can be celebrated, not hidden. It can be an introduction to diversity within the classroom community.
- * **Questions:** What do you think of when you hear the word - different? How are people different? How do you sometimes feel different? What would it feel like if everyone were the same?
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Play 'Simon Says' - Students become familiar with their similarities and differences. E.g. Simon says "Everyone with brown eyes, stand up." Simon says "Everyone who has a dog, put your hand on your head." Simon says "Everyone who speaks another language, hop on one leg."
 - Observations in blind contour drawing - In pairs, students observe and do a blind contour drawing of their partners. This requires them to keep their eyes on their partner and not on their pencil or paper. The task requires them to practice slowness and really **seeing** another individual.
 - 'Getting to know you' - In pairs, students discuss and brainstorm a list of what they have in common and how they are different. Teacher can provide prompts such as - physical appearance, likes and dislikes, pets, favourite colours, food, activities, etc. Together, they complete a graphic organizer such as a Venn diagram and share with the class.
 - Other resources: *The Crayon Box that Talked* by Shane Derolf or the book trailer <https://vimeo.com/23111919>, *The Big Orange Splot* by Daniel Manus Pinkwater

U nity

“We are made for co-operation, like feet, like hands, like eyelids, like the rows of the upper and lower teeth. To act against one another, then, is contrary to nature.”

Marcus Aurelius

- * **Purpose:** Unity is the feeling of being at one with others and inclusivity. It is about working together in a cooperative community. It allows students to see and experience the connectivity they have with all people and life.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *If the world were a village* by David J. Smith Themes: community, diversity, culture, global awareness. Grade Levels: K-7 This information book condenses the world's population to a village of 100 and introduces concepts of education, language, demographics, culture, statistics, and much more.
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Mystery Skype -Teacher organizes a mystery Skype with another classroom somewhere in the world. Students work cooperatively and ask thoughtful questions to find the location of their mystery classroom. Students must also answer questions asked by their mystery classroom. This activity demands students work together. <https://education.skype.com/mysteryskype>
 - 100 People: A World Portrait - The class selects and celebrates someone in the community. Collectively, students participate by creating an art, photography or written project about this special person and submit to: <http://www.100people.org>
 - A Day in the Life - Students work in small groups to plan, write and make a short video about a day in their life.
 - Connecting classrooms- A British initiative to increase student's global and digital citizenship. Class will communicate and partner with another classroom across the globe. Many classroom resources can be found here: https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/classroom-resources/list?combine=&field_partnership_type_value_selective=partner&field_age_suitability_value_selective=All
 - Comparative Global study - *Families Around the World* by Margariet Ruurs, *Where Children Sleep* by James Mollison and *What the World Eats* by Faith D'Alusio. Students learn about how other people across the globe live. Students compare and contrast their own possessions or diets with another child from a different culture. There is also an article that shows children's bedrooms from all around the world. <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/08/where-children-sleep-a-round-the-world-tour-of-bedrooms/243303/>
 - Other resources: *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs* by Judi Barrett to talk about cooperation, *Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, *Together We Are One* a song by Serena Ryder

Vision

“In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations.”
Iroquois Maxim

- * **Purpose:** Vision is the ability to see possibilities in our future and the ability to see people and situations clearly. Students learn to set goals and make dreams become a reality. They learn that their hopes and dreams shape their lives and the choices they make. They really can change the world.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *An Awesome Book* by self-publisher Dallas Clayton Themes: dreams, imagination, aspiration Grade Levels: K-2 An enjoyable book for people of all ages about dreaming. Dream some dreams, then dream a million more “and not a million quiet dreams, a million dreams that ROAR.” The book has some wacky ideas that ignite children’s imaginations (e.g. cars that run on jellybeans). An interactive book is available for free online <http://www.veryawesomeworld.com> (this could be set up for students during centres).
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Onomatopoeia - In pairs, students create a sound that goes with a given page. Teacher re-reads story and students call out the sounds after each page is read. This could extend into a puppet’s theatre.
 - Carousel comics - Students, in small groups identify onomatopoeia examples in comics. Each time they rotate, they try to find examples that previous groups did not find. Groups share examples with class. Individuals create own comic strip using examples of onomatopoeia. Theme could be ‘their dreams’ -BAM, SMACK, KABOOM, CRASH, BUZZ, etc.
 - Other resources: *All in a Day* by Cynthia Rylant, *Miss Rumphius* by Barbara Clooney

Wonder

“Grown-ups never understand anything for themselves, and it is tiresome for children to be always and forever explaining things to them.”

Saint-Exupéry - *The Little Prince*

- * **Purpose:** One of our jobs as educators is to nurture a student’s natural sense of wonder and awe. Since children tend to be more curious, eager and enthusiastic in early primary age, a teacher can utilize these qualities to introduce many new experiences to children. If there is an extra WOW factor, student will hold that vivid memory for a long time. Include inquiry-based projects that stem from what students want to know and learn. Cultivate a child’s desire of wonder by giving them many opportunities to question and discover.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *I Wonder* by Annaka Harris Themes: wonder, curiosity, the unknown. Grade Levels: k-2 This story is about a girl named Eva who goes for a walk with her mother and they encounter many mysteries such as gravity, life cycles, and the vastness of the universe. She learns there are many things to wonder about and that it’s okay not to know all the answers. This is an excellent picture book to kickstart any inquiry-based project in many areas of Science.
- * **Optional activities:**
 - Also read aloud - *What do you do with an idea?* by Kobi Yamada can also be a springboard to inquiry-based projects. Students discuss what is an idea, where do ideas come from, what do they do with them, and how do they give it attention so that it will grow.
 - Teacher can extend the KWL chart to KWHL to incorporate a *how* component. How will I find out the answers? How did the learning take place? How can we find out more? Or they can further extend the chart to KWHLAQ that adds *actions* and *questions* to this learning strategy. <http://langwitches.org/blog/2015/06/12/an-update-to-the-upgraded-kwl-for-the-21st-century/>
 - Wonderwall - Incorporate a space in the classroom for students to place their questions. Make the wall reusable with dry erase pens and plastic sleeves.
 - Corral Ideas - Students keep a writer’s notebook or ePortfolio to capture their ideas and interests throughout the school year. They can refer to it for any future writing activities.
 - Other resources: *Stars* by Mary Lyn Ray, *Snowflake Bentley* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin

X is for Magic

“And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don't believe in magic will never find it.”

Roald Dahl - *The Minpins*

- * **Purpose:** A child's imagination and creativity is sometimes suppressed in our education system and Roald Dahl (one of my favourite children's authors) is a true legend at bringing magic through his storytelling.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Matilda* by Roald Dahl is an enjoyable book for children of all ages. Themes: elementary school, cleverness, creativity and imagination, magic Grade Levels: 3-5 An enjoyable book for children of all ages about a likeable, sweet girl named Matilda. In the story she uses mysterious magic powers and plays practical jokes to get back at her mean parents and tyrannical principal, who clearly dislikes children.
Caution: There is language that may be unacceptable for sensitive children and parents. 'Read' your parents and children.
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Good and Bad characters - students Think, Pair and Share about characters that are really good (Matilda and Miss. Honey) versus really bad (Miss Trunchbull and Matilda's father Harry Wormwood). Students in groups of 4 or 5, discuss the characteristics of one of the four main characters. For each character, students brainstorm how the characters look, their behaviour, and what they say may influence whether the reader thinks the character is good or bad. Students need to provide explicit examples. After some time, experts return to their 'home' group to share their information. Students can fill out a graphic organizer such as a Mind Map to write down the information they collect.
 - Magic Powers - Students Think, Pair and Share if they could have a special power, what would it be, when and how could they use it to help people. Students can create a 'magic box' to hold all their powers.
 - Classroom rules - Miss Trunchbull is very strict with all the girls at Crunchem Hall. Students in groups make up their own rules and they can also make rules for their teacher.
 - After further class discussions, teacher can ask pairs of students to describe their favourite good and bad character and/or talk about their special power or classroom rules. Teacher can record students on padlet.com to share with parents.
 - Other resources: a shorter picture book about magic, an endless box of yarn and generosity - *Extra Yarn* by Mac Barnett, *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis

Wh Y Virtues?

“If we are to teach real peace in this world and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.”
Mahatma Gandhi

- * Character or moral education is essential in today's world. In our society and education system, where the emphasis is on standardized tests, academic success, competition and winning, learning about virtues is often overlooked. Character education helps schools create a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment for all students. In order for students to recognize and practice virtues, it requires families, teachers and schools to nurture and cultivate these character strengths. Teachers need to weave virtues into the curriculum. Likewise, parents need to pay attention to those important teachable moments. Also, students need the opportunity to investigate and communicate these virtues in their daily lives. Collectively, schools can help infuse virtues into the school experience (i.e. Lord Nelson Elementary's motto of R.O.A.R. - respect others, act responsibly). The education community as a whole should contemplate what an ideal, responsible and global citizen in the 21st century will look like and include this social and emotional development in schools.

“I would like to ask that we begin to dream about and plan for a different world. A fairer world. A world of happier men and happier women who are truer to themselves. And this is how to start: we must raise our daughters differently. We must also raise our sons differently . . . “ from *We Should All be Feminists*, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Zealousness

“I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.”
Albert Einstein

- * **Purpose:** Zealousness is being cheerful, enthusiastic and passionate. Being zealous is approaching life wholeheartedly by looking forward to things, sharing your excitement and having an optimistic attitude.
- * **Lesson:** Read aloud - *Travels with My Family* by Marie-Louise Gay and David Homel Themes: family, holidays, travelling, dealing with unusual situations, adventures Grade Levels: 3 - 6 This book is about Charlie and the unusual adventures their family have together on their travels. The parents are always wanting to go where there are no other tourists. Other books in the series are *On the Road Again!*, *Summer in the City* and *The Travelling Circus*.
- * **Optional Activities:**
 - Write a postcard - Students imagine they have gone on a trip and they draw and write a postcard to their friend. To change up the activity, students could also write from the moon or write as if they were the family pet, etc.
 - Keep a class pet - Students are generally very interested and enthusiastic about living things in the classroom. I've seen snails, goldfish, chicks, worms and butterflies. To tie in the story of *Frederick*, students could keep a mouse or hamster. Classroom pets encourage classroom community, foster a sense of responsibility and add a great deal of zest and passion into the classroom. The classroom pet can be a stepping stone to dynamic cross-curricula learning.
 - Other resources: *The Little Brute Family* by Russell Hoban; *Frederick* by Leo Lionni

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