

# Picture Books to Support Core Competency Work

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# Creative Thinking

## Compiled by Joan Pearce and Carol Walters

The creative thinking competency involves the generation of new ideas and concepts that have value to the individual or others, and the development of these ideas and concepts from thought to reality.

### 1. Novelty and value

Students get creative ideas that are both novel and have value. There are degrees of novelty—an idea may be new to that student or it may be new to their peers; it may be novel for their age group, or it may be novel to a larger community. It may be new in a particular context or absolutely new. The idea or product may also have value in a variety of ways and contexts—it may be fun, it may provide a sense of accomplishment, it may solve a naturally occurring problem, it may be a form of self-expression, it may provide a new perspective that influences how people think about something or the actions people take. An idea can have an impact on the individual student, classmates, a larger group of peers, in one's community, or on a global level.

### 2. Generating ideas

Students may generate creative ideas as a result of free play, engagement with someone else's ideas, a naturally occurring problem or constraints, or interest or passion. New ideas and inspirations can spontaneously arise from the unconscious mind, which is why students often report that their ideas just "pop" into their heads. However, students can also become aware of, and use, ways to help their unconscious minds generate ideas—giving their unconscious minds lots of ideas and information to combine and recombine at random (e.g., by learning a lot about something of interest), providing the incubation time for the unconscious to work, and quieting the filters and censors in the conscious and subconscious minds that tend to prevent novel ideas and inspirations from rising to the conscious mind (e.g., by doing relaxing or automatic activities).

### 3. Developing ideas

After students get creative ideas, they evaluate them, decide which ones to develop, refine them, and work to realize them in some way. This process of developing ideas may require building the necessary skills, sustaining perseverance, and using failure productively over time. It may also require generating additional creative ideas to come up with solutions to problems along the way.



# Creative Thinking

## Set of Profiles: Creative Thinking Competency

These profile descriptions include three facets that underpin Creative Thinking Competency: novelty and value, generating ideas, developing ideas. The three facets are interrelated and are embedded within the profile descriptions, which are written from a student's point of view.

### PROFILE

### DESCRIPTION



1

I get ideas when I play.

I get ideas when I use my senses to explore. My play ideas are fun for me and make me happy. I make my ideas work or I change what I am doing.



2

I can get new ideas or build on or combine other people's ideas to create new things within the constraints of a form, a problem, or materials.

I can get new ideas, build on other's ideas and add new ideas of my own, or combine other people's ideas in new ways to create new things or solve straightforward problems. My ideas are fun, entertaining, or useful for me and my peers, and I have a sense of accomplishment. I can usually make my ideas work within the constraints of a given form, problem, or materials if I keep playing with them.



3

I can get new ideas in areas in which I have an interest and build my skills to make them work.

I generate new ideas as I pursue my interests. I deliberately learn a lot about something (e.g., by doing research, talking to others, or practising), so that I am able to generate new ideas about it or the ideas just pop into my head. I build the skills I need to make my ideas work, and usually succeed, even if it takes a few tries.



4

I can get new ideas or reinterpret others' ideas in ways that have an impact on my peers.

I get ideas that are new to my peers. My creative ideas are often a form of self-expression for me. I have deliberate strategies for quieting my conscious mind (e.g., walking away for a while, doing something relaxing, being deliberately playful), so that I can be more creative. I use my experiences with various steps and attempts to direct my future work.



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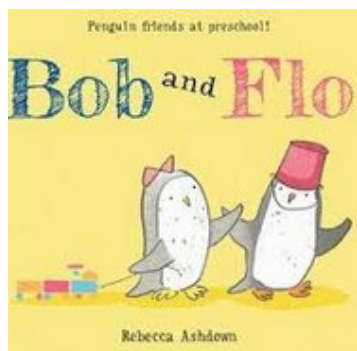
I can develop a body of creative work over time in an area of interest or passion.

I can get new ideas and develop them to form a body of work over time or to have an impact in my community or beyond. I have interests and passions that I pursue over time. I am willing to take significant risks in my thinking. I can persevere over years if necessary to develop my ideas. I expect ambiguity, failure and setbacks, and use them to advance my thinking.



# Creative Thinking

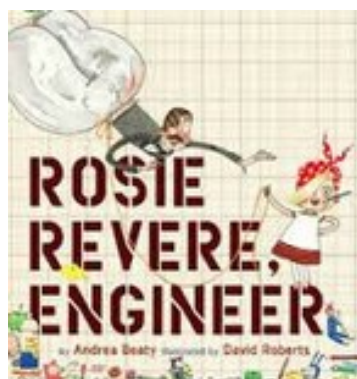
Books and activities to support creative thinking in the classroom:



## Bob and Flo By Rebecca Ashdown

It's Flo's first day of preschool. She has her lunch in a bucket and a new bow—but soon her bucket disappears! Does her classmate Bob have anything to do with the bucket mystery? How two irresistible little penguins find both Flo's bucket and a new friendship makes for a preschool charmer.

⇒ What other creative uses are there for common objects like buckets? As you play, think of new ways to use familiar objects. Share your ideas with others.



## Rosie Revere Engineer By Andrea Beaty

Rosie may seem quiet during the day, but at night she's a brilliant inventor of gizmos and gadgets who dreams of becoming a great engineer. When her great-great-aunt Rose (Rosie the Riveter) comes for a visit and mentions her one unfinished goal--to fly--Rosie sets to work building a contraption to make her aunt's dream come true.

⇒ Using found materials, design a contraption to help great, great Aunt Rose fly (of course it doesn't actually need to fly!). If Aunt Rose wanted to go under water instead, create a design for that. What else might Aunt Rose want to do? She might need more contraptions!



## The Something By Rebecca Cobb

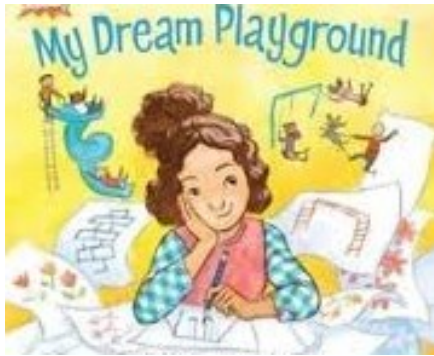
When a little boy's ball disappears down a mysterious hole in the garden, he can't stop thinking about what could be down there - a little mouse's house? The lair of a hungry troll? Or maybe even a dragon's den. Whatever it may be, he's determined to find out!

⇒ What's in the hole? Give each student an opportunity to decide what's in the hole? To spark creativity, go to the library and browse books ... a dragon book might inspire an underground dragon. Have each student draw and paint underground scenes like those in the book. This one begs for a big bulletin board display!





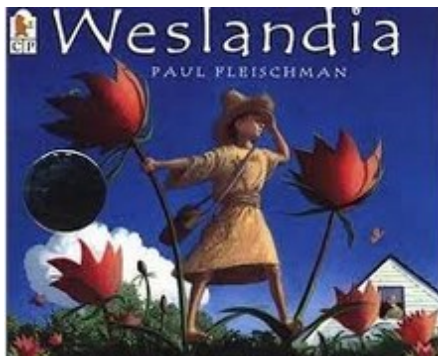
# Creative Thinking



**My Dream Playground** By Kate M. Becker

**A resourceful little girl with big ideas becomes a key part of the team when a community of family, friends, and neighbors builds a playground.**

- ⇒ Design a playground. It might be inside or out, with natural materials, or futuristic plastics and metal, for the very young, or the very old! Perhaps an outdoor classroom suits you better, or a new type of sports facility.



**Westlandia** by Paul Fleischman

**Enter the witty, intriguing world of Weslandia! Now that school is over, Wesley needs a summer project. He's learned that each civilization needs a staple food crop, so he decides to sow a garden and start his own - civilization, that is.**

- ⇒ Pick a plant. Think of all the different ways that it might be used (Think about food, clothing, shelter, furniture, medicines, art and culture). Tie this concept into a First Nation's perspective ... using resources to their maximum potential (e.g. the cedar tree)



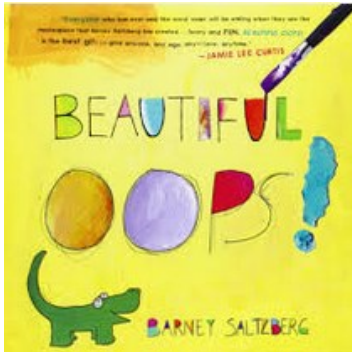
**The Line** By Paula Bossio

**In this deceptively simple wordless picture book, a small girl finds the end of a long black line and picks it up. She wiggles the line, slides down it and spins inside circles made from it. In her hands, the line transforms into bubbles to blow, a jungle vine to swing from and a tightrope to balance on.**

- ⇒ A line might be a stage, a wave or a monster. Turn a line into something creative using Paula Bossio's book as inspiration. I see a class book emerging from this one!
- ⇒ Take students outside. And with chalk, create a line that transforms into something. It may be a realistic transformation or abstract in nature! Take photos for portfolios of your students' creative products.



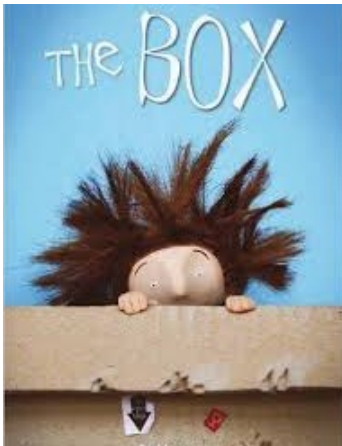
# Creative Thinking



## Beautiful Oops! By Barney Saltzberg

A life lesson that all parents want their children to learn: It's OK to make a mistake. In fact, hooray for mistakes! A mistake is an adventure in creativity, a portal of discovery. A spill doesn't ruin a drawing—not when it becomes the shape of a goofy animal. And an accidental tear in your paper? Don't be upset about it when you can turn it into the roaring mouth of an alligator.

⇒ Go on a scavenger hunt. Discarded materials are often someone else's 'oops' that they've given up on. Think outside of the box and repurpose some of these items. One person's garbage is another's inspiration.



## The Box by Axel Janssens

Leopold's new bike makes him the envy of every kid in town—well almost every kid. While Leopold is busy showing off his bright red bike, with its loud bell and thunderbolt decal, imaginative and kind hearted Kobe plays in a box and pays no attention to the new bike. Leopold gets angry when he runs into Kobe's box while riding his bike, but he soon learns that the box can take the kids on the playground places that Leopold's bike never could—jungles, race tracks, and the sky! By the end of playtime, Leopold learns the value of imagination, friendship, and cooperation.

⇒ Find a box. What can you make with it? What kind of adventures can you go on?



## The Most Magnificent Thing By Ashley Spires

Ashley Spires has created a charming picture book about an unnamed girl and her very best friend, who happens to be a dog. The girl has a wonderful idea. She is going to make the most MAGNIFICENT thing! She knows just how it will look. She knows just how it will work. All she has to do is make it, and she makes things all the time. Easy-peasy! But making her magnificent thing is anything but easy, and the girl tries and fails, repeatedly. Eventually, the girl gets really, really mad. She is so mad, in fact, that she quits. But after her dog convinces her to take a walk, she comes back to her project with renewed enthusiasm and manages to get it just right.

⇒ Take a trip to the electronic section of the recycling centre, the Sally Anne, or Value Village for a collection of nuts, bolts, and thing-a-ma-jigs from which to build. Challenge a team to build a tall structure, or one that will hold weight. Get the duct tape ready!



# Positive Personal & Cultural Identity

The positive personal and cultural identity competency involves the awareness, understanding, and appreciation of all the facets that contribute to a healthy sense of oneself. It includes awareness and understanding of one's family background, heritage(s), language(s), beliefs, and perspectives in a pluralistic society.

Books and activities to support creative thinking in the classroom:

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## Set of Profiles: Positive Personal and Cultural Identity Competency

These profile descriptions include three facets that underpin Positive Personal and Cultural Identity Competency: relationships and cultural contexts, personal values and choices, and personal strengths and abilities. The three facets are interrelated and are embedded within the profile descriptions, which are written from a student's point of view.

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PROFILE	DESCRIPTION
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1

I am aware of myself as different from others.  
I know my name. With some help, I can identify some of my attributes.



2

I am aware of different aspects of myself. I can identify people, places, and things that are important to me.  
I can identify some of my individual characteristics. I can describe my family, home, and/or community (people and/or place).  
I can explain what I like and dislike. I am able to explain what interests me.



3

I can describe different aspects of my identity. I have pride in who I am.  
I am able to identify different groups that I belong to. I am able to represent aspects of my cultural contexts (such as family, communities, school, peer groups) through words and/or images. I can describe what is important to me. I can describe and demonstrate pride in my positive qualities, characteristics, and/or skills. I can explain how I am able to use these to contribute to my home and/or community.



4

I understand that my identity is influenced by many aspects of my life. I am aware that my values shape my choices, and contribute to making me a unique individual.  
I understand that my identity is made up of many interconnected aspects of my life such as experiences, family history, heritage, where I live, and groups I identify with (including family, friends, peers, and virtual communities). I understand that what I value influences the choices I make and how I present myself in various contexts. I understand that my characteristics, qualities, strengths, and challenges make me unique, and are an important part of the communities I belong to (including people and places).



5

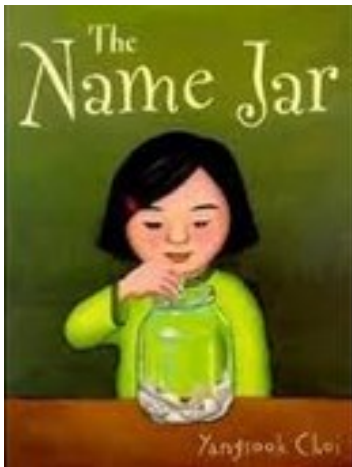
I can identify how my life experiences have contributed to who I am; I recognize the continuous and evolving nature of my identity.  
I understand that my learning is continuous and my concept of self and identity will continue to evolve. I can describe how aspects of my life experiences, family history, background, and where I live (or have lived) have influenced my values and choices. I can identify how my strengths can help me meet challenges, and I understand that I will continue to develop new skills, abilities, and strengths.  
I can identify how my challenges can be opportunities for growth. I can identify my potential as a leader in the communities I belong to.

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## Positive Personal & Cultural Identity



### The Name Jar by Yangsook Choi

Being the new kid in school is hard enough, but what about when nobody can pronounce your name? Having just moved from Korea, Unhei is anxious that American kids will like her. So instead of introducing herself on the first day of school, she tells the class that she will choose a name by the following week. Her new classmates are fascinated by this no-name girl and decide to help out by filling a glass jar with names for her to pick from. But while Unhei practices being a Suzy, Laura, or Amanda, one of her classmates comes to her neighborhood and discovers her real name and its special meaning.

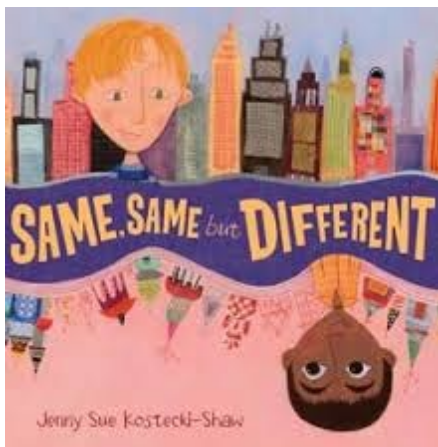
- ⇒ Encourage students to have conversations with their parents regarding the origin of their name.
- ⇒ Find baby names books and look up the meaning and origin of some names.
- ⇒ Create a journal entry that explains how you were named. This makes lovely class book.



### My Name is Aviva by Leslea Newman

"My name is Aviva, not Amoeba!" shouts Aviva at her teasing classmates. Aviva is determined to change her name until she discovers where her name comes from and why her parents chose that special name for her.

- ⇒ As above, this book lends itself to a bit of research regarding origins of names.
- ⇒ With information from each student, create a class book with a memoir about the story of each student's name.



### Same, Same but Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw

Elliot lives in America, and Kailash lives in India. They are pen pals. By exchanging letters and pictures, they learn that they both love to climb trees, have pets, and go to school. Their worlds might look different, but they are actually similar. Same, same. But different!

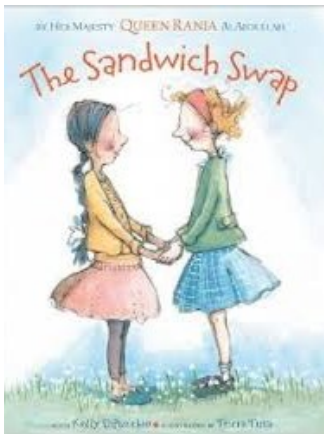
Through an inviting point-of-view and colorful, vivid illustrations, this story shows how two boys living oceans apart can be the best of friends.

- ⇒ You may want to establish a pen pal relationship with a child in another part of the world. Back and forth entries can be made into a book with illustrations.





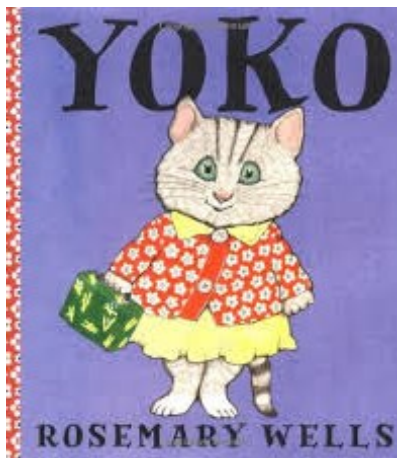
# Positive Personal & Cultural Identity



## The Sandwich Swap by Queen Rania

Lily and Salma are best friends. They like doing all the same things, and they always eat lunch together. Lily eats peanut butter and Salma eats hummus-but what's that between friends? It turns out, a lot. Before they know it, a food fight breaks out. Can Lily and Salma put aside their differences? Or will a sandwich come between them

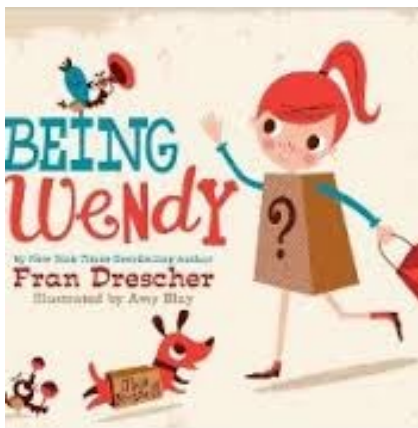
- ⇒ This book leads naturally to a comparison of cultural foods.
- ⇒ A day of food sharing would be memorable for years to come for students.
- ⇒ Some families make food choices based on health, allergies, or beliefs. This too forms a part of their identity.



## Yoko by Rosemary Wells

Mmm, Yoko's mom has packed her favorite for lunch today-sushi! But her classmates don't think it looks quite so yummy. "Ick!" says one of the Franks. "It's seaweed!" They're not even impressed by her red bean ice cream dessert. Of course, Mrs. Jenkins has a plan that might solve Yoko's problem. But will it work with the other children in class?

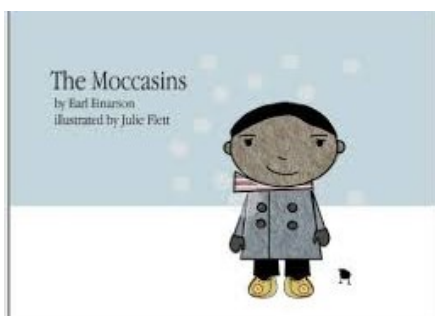
- ⇒ Draw and label what's in your lunch.
- ⇒ Continue to draw and make charts or bar graphs to capture food trends in the class.
- ⇒ Do some research about the healthiest foods or cultural foods that are part of your family.



## Being Wendy by Fran Drescher

Wendy isn't sure she can choose a box for life. She has too many interests to lock herself in. But everyone else seems to be able to make a decision.

- ⇒ Describe the different aspects of your identity. What do you like? What are you good at? What are your hopes and dreams? Do you ever feel labelled?
- ⇒ Using brown paper squares, create images or labels that show all the aspects of your identity.
- ⇒ Or, glue several images on the outside of a brown paper lunch bag, and hide your name on the inside. Can others figure out your bag?



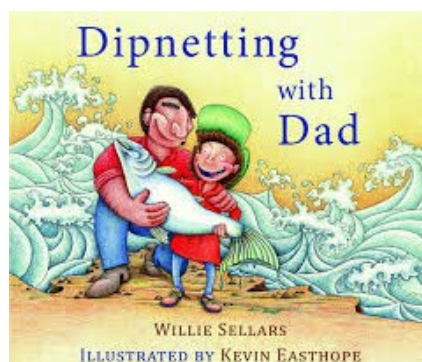
## The Moccasins by Earl Einarson

Get out the tissue! This is an endearing story of a young Aboriginal foster child who is given a special gift by his foster mother. Her gift of warmth and thoughtfulness helps her young foster children by encouraging self-esteem, acceptance and love. Written as a simple story, it speaks of a positive foster experience and Aboriginal identity.

- ⇒ Book a time with Gail Martindale and Lynn Swift. They are happy to help with the core competencies and First Peoples learning.



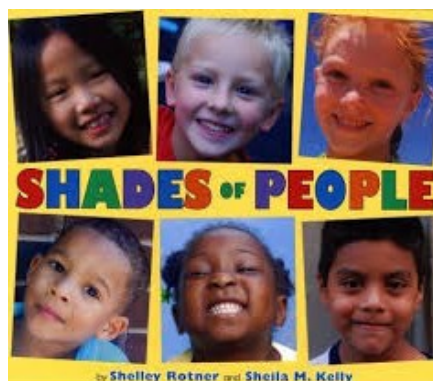
## Positive Personal & Cultural Identity



### Dip netting with Dad by Willie Sellars

BUMP, BUMP - SLAP, river sockeye salmon are pulled onto shore! Set in the beautiful landscape of the Cariboo Chilcotin region, DIPNETTING WITH DAD is a delightful and colourful story of a father teaching his son the Secwepemc method of fishing known as dipnetting. Together they visit the sweat lodge, mend the nets, select the best fishing spot and catch and pack their fish through rugged bush back to the family home for traditional preparation

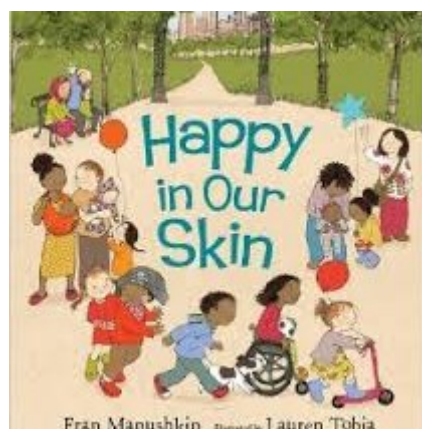
- ⇒ Find a way to show a skill you have learned from a parent, grandparent, or elder e.g. fishing, knitting, cooking, gardening, crafts, music etc.



### Shades of People by Shelley Rotner

Cocoa, tan, rose, and almond-people come in lots of shades, even in the same family. This exploration of one of our most noticeable physical traits uses vibrant photographs of children and a short text to inspire young children both to take notice and to look beyond the obvious

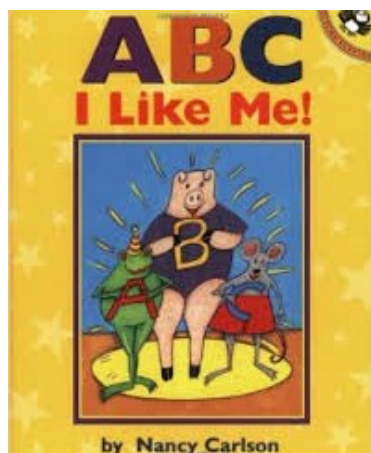
- ⇒ On paper, paint faces or whole bodies with lots of colour mixing. Using black, fine tipped markers, label with the lovely colour words in the book that best describe the shades of colour used. Fill a bulletin board with faces and colour words!
- ⇒ Paint stores often have descriptive names for paint chips and they're free! Gather them up and watch the labeling vocabulary soar!



### Happy in Our Skin by Fran Manushkin

Is there anything more splendid than a baby's skin? For families of all stripes comes a sweet celebration of what makes us unique—and what holds us together.

- ⇒ Make fingerprints. Enlarge them or make comparisons using magnifying lenses. Are there two fingerprints exactly alike? Can they be grouped into categories? (loops or arches?)

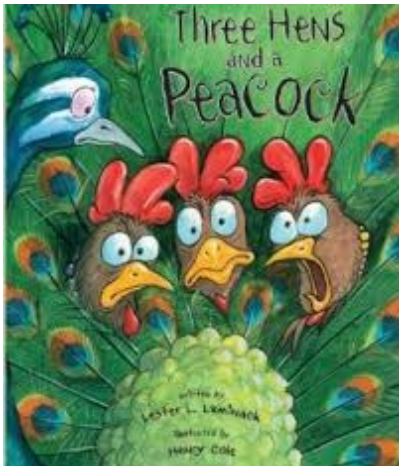


### ABC I Like Me by Nancy Carlson

**Nancy Carlson's** cheerful pig is back in this vibrant ABC companion book to the best-selling **I Like Me!**--and she's brought along a few friends to join her. The letters of the alphabet are illustrated with brightly-colored, action-packed pictures and are accompanied by read-along text. Introduce children to the alphabet and reinforce positive self-esteem with the lovable characters of **ABC I Like Me!**

- ⇒ With big buddies, or on their own, students create their own I can, I have, I am, I like to, I am good at, I try to, statements. Each statement can be illustrated and used to create a class book.





### Three Hens and a Peacock

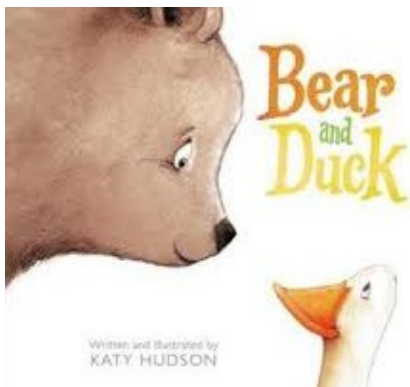
Laminack and Cole's hilarious book reveals what happens when some foolish farm animals decide to trade roles-and discover just how hard it is to do someone else's job.

The Tuckers' farm is a peaceful place: cows chew their cud, hens lay their eggs, and the old hound rests on the porch. Everyone has a job and no one complains. That is, until a hapless peacock suddenly falls off the back of a passing truck and stirs things up.

Soon, customers are flocking to the farm to see what all the fuss is about, and business is booming. But the hens don't like the newcomer getting attention while they stay cooped up doing all the hard work.

The wise old hound sees the problem and helps his feathered friends orchestrate a job swap. What follows is the hilarious tale of three hens who get in way over their feathered heads, and one very distressed peacock who just can't figure out how to lay an egg.

⇒ Write or role play pretending you are someone or something else. As we take on the perspectives of others, we learn about others, their identity and what's important to them.



### Bear and Duck by Katy Hudson

Bear is sick and tired of being a bear. Who wants to sleep all winter? His fur feels so hot in the summer. And the bees . . . there are just too many angry bees! Bear is done being a bear. But when he sees a line of happy yellow ducklings, he has a thought. What if he could be a duck?

With a few duck lessons from Duck, Bear learns that being a duck is fun; but as it turns out, Bear realizes he makes a really good bear . . . and he makes a really good friend along the way.

⇒ We often envy others, but when we take the time to carefully analyse the other side, we may just learn about the positive aspects to being ourselves. Create a 'Plus/Minus' chart to take stock of our blessings.





# Critical Thinking

## Set of Profiles: Critical Thinking Competency

These profile descriptions include the three facets that underpin the Critical Thinking Competency: analyze and critique, question and investigate, and develop and design. The three facets are interrelated and are embedded within the profile descriptions, which are written from a student's point of view.

### PROFILE

### DESCRIPTION



1

I can explore.

I can explore materials and actions. I can show if I like something or not.



2

I can use evidence to make simple judgments.

I can ask questions, make predictions, and use my senses to gather information. I can explore with a purpose in mind and use what I learn. I can tell or show something about my thinking. I can contribute to and use simple criteria. I can find some evidence and make judgments.



3

I can ask questions and consider options. I can use my observations, experience, and imagination to draw conclusions and make judgments.

I can ask open-ended questions, explore, gather information, and experiment purposefully to develop options. I can contribute to and use criteria. I can use observation, experience, and imagination to draw conclusions, make judgments, and ask new questions. I can describe my thinking and how it is changing.



4

I can gather and combine new evidence with what I already know to develop reasoned conclusions, judgments, or plans.

I can use what I know and observe to identify problems and ask questions. I can explore and engage with materials and sources. I can consider more than one way to proceed and make choices based on my reasoning and what I am trying to do. I can develop or adapt criteria, check information, assess my thinking, and develop reasoned conclusions, judgments, or plans.



5

I can evaluate and use well-chosen evidence to develop interpretations; identify alternatives, perspectives, and implications; and make judgments. I can examine and adjust my thinking.

I can ask questions and offer judgments, conclusions, and interpretations supported by evidence I or others have gathered. I am flexible and open-minded; I can explain more than one perspective and consider implications. I can gather, select, evaluate, and synthesize information. I can consider alternative approaches and make strategic choices. I can take risks and recognize that I may not be immediately successful. I can examine my thinking, seek feedback, reassess my work, and adjust.



6

I can examine evidence from various perspectives to analyze and make well-supported judgments and interpretations about complex issues.

I can determine my own framework and criteria for tasks that involve critical thinking. I can compile evidence and draw reasoned conclusions. I can consider views that do not fit with my beliefs. I am open-minded and patient, taking the time to explore, discover, and understand. I can make choices that will help me create my intended impact on an audience or situation. I can place my work and that of others in a broader context. I can connect the results of my inquiries and analyses to action.



# Critical Thinking

## The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade



### Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade

Sally notices everything—from the twenty-seven keys on the janitor's ring to the bullying happening on the playground. One day, Sally has had enough and decides to make herself heard. And when she takes a chance and stands up to the bullies, she finds that one small girl can make a big difference

⇒ Do an experiment in which students are challenged to sit back, observe, and pay extra special attention. When students focus on kind deeds as intentional observers, their positive awareness



### Step Gently Out

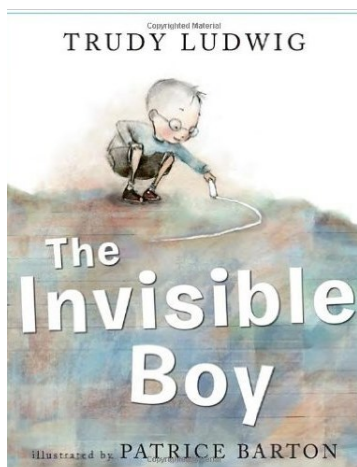
*Be still, and watch a single blade of grass.*

*An ant climbs up to look around.*

*A honeybee flies past.*

What would happen if you walked very, very quietly and looked ever so carefully at the natural world outside? You might see a cricket leap, a moth spread her wings, or a spider step across a silken web. In simple, evocative language, Helen Frost offers a hint at the many tiny creatures around us.

⇒ Outside, find one thing that captures your attention. Observe that object closely. What senses are you using? What



### The Invisible Boy

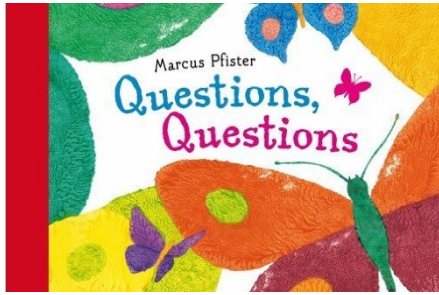
Meet Brian, the invisible boy. Nobody ever seems to notice him or think to include him in their group, game, or birthday party . . . until, that is, a new kid comes to class.

When Justin, the new boy, arrives, Brian is the first to make him feel welcome. And when Brian and Justin team up to work on a class project together, Brian finds a way to shine

⇒ Royston Elementary has a designated bench outside in the playground where students can sit if they would like someone to come up and ask them if they would like to play. This simple strategy offers support to children who would like to join in the play but lack the skills or confidence to approach others. Wouldn't 'Bench Stories' make wonderful pieces of writing as students observe what happens in this special spot?



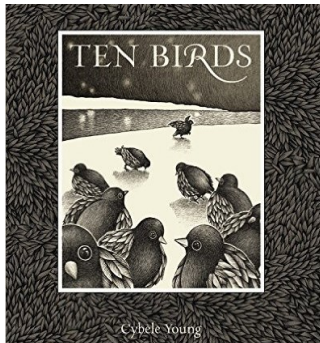
# Critical Thinking



## Questions Questions

How do birds learn how to sing?  
What brings summer after spring?

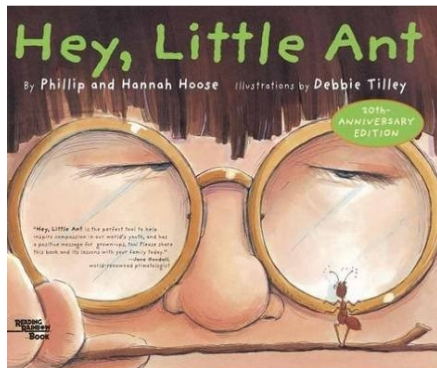
What turns the leaves from green to brown and sends them floating gently down?  
In thirteen engaging couplets, Marcus Pfister opens children's eyes to the wondrous mysteries all around them  
⇒ Take students outside, encourage careful observation and lots of question-asking. Share questions with each other and note those individuals whose questions were the same. This can lead to individual or class inquiry projects.



## The Birds

Ten birds are trying to figure out how to get to the other side of the river. The bird they call 'Brilliant' devises a pair of stilts. The bird they call 'Highly Satisfactory' engineers a raft. One by one, nine resourceful birds make the crossing until a single bird is left behind - the one they call 'Needs Improvement'. This bird's solution proves surprising - and absurdly simple.

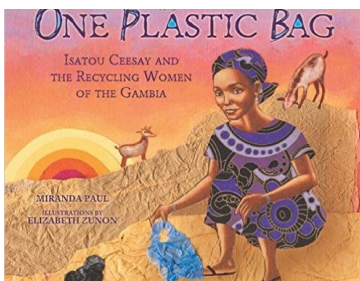
⇒ Using craft materials, have students create a contraption to get an animal from one side of the Puntledge River to the other.



## Hey Little Ant!

What would you do if the ant you were about to step on looked up and started talking? Would you stop and listen? What if your friends saw you hesitate? That's what happens in this funny, thought-provoking book. Originally a song by a father-daughter team, this conversation between two creatures, large and small, is bound to inspire important discussions. It might even answer that classic childhood question: To squish or not to squish?

⇒ Have students write in role or dramatize the perspectives of an ant.  
⇒ Go outside, find an ant, worms, or caterpillars. Instead of capturing and placing in a jar, observe it closely in its own habitat.



## One Plastic Bag

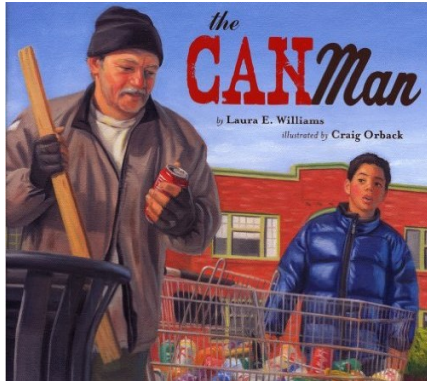
Plastic bags are cheap and easy to use. But what happens when a bag breaks or is no longer needed? In Njau, Gambia, people simply dropped the bags and went on their way. One plastic bag became two. Then ten. Then a hundred. The bags accumulated in ugly heaps alongside roads. Water pooled in them, bringing mosquitoes and disease. Some bags were burned, leaving behind a terrible smell. Some were buried, but they strangled gardens. They killed livestock that tried to eat them. Something had to change. Isatou Ceesay was that change. She found a way to recycle the bags and transform her community. This inspirational true story shows how one person's actions really can make a difference in our world.

⇒ This book is a perfect launch for I CAN projects. With simple questions such as, "What does this book inspire you to do?" in combination with, "What bugs you?" there's a natural entry point to inspire students to make a difference.  
⇒ Ask, "What recycling projects come to mind?"  
⇒ Walk around your neighbourhood. Where can we make a difference?





# Critical Thinking

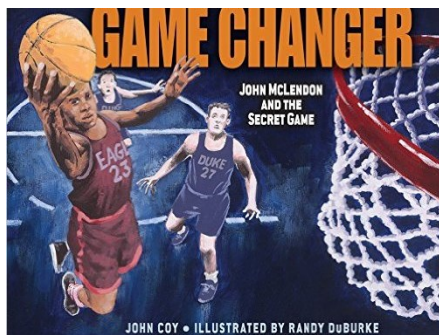


## The Can Man

Tim's birthday is just a week away, and more than anything he wants a skateboard. But money is tight, and Tim knows his family cannot afford to buy him a board.

As Tim ponders how he might earn money for a skateboard, he hears The Can Man down the street collecting empty soft drink cans. The clang of the cans in the homeless man's cart gives Tim an idea. He will collect cans too, and cash them in for the redemption money. By the end of the week, Tim has almost reached his goal-until a couple of chance encounters with The Can Man change everything.

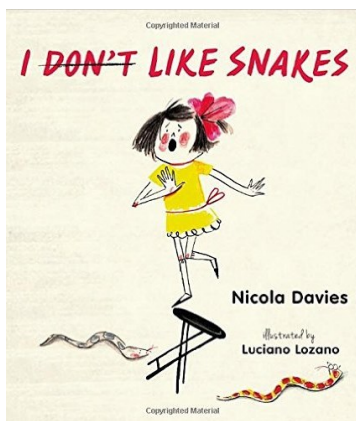
- ⇒ Research organizations that provide means for people to help others e.g. UNICEF, Compassion Gift Catalogue, Save the Children etc. For example, \$20 can buy a goat to provide milk for a family for a year. What does our local food bank like to receive? What difference does it make for those who make use



## Game Changer

When they piled into cars and drove through Durham, North Carolina, the members of the Duke University Medical School basketball team only knew that they were going somewhere to play basketball. They didn't know whom they would play against. But when they came face to face with their opponents, they quickly realized this secret game was going to make history. Discover the true story of how in 1944, Coach John McLendon orchestrated a secret game between the best players from a white college and his team from the North Carolina College of Negroes. At a time of widespread segregation and rampant racism, this illegal gathering changed the sport of basketball forever.

- ⇒ Have you checked out the Newsela app? It offers lots of topics from which to choose along with 5 different reading levels. Find controversial issues and have discussions about differing perspectives.
- ⇒ Local issues: homeless shelter, a new bridge, local versus regional hospital, property tax increase to help homelessness



## I (Don't) Like Snakes

This little girl has a problem. Her family doesn't have dogs, or cats, or birds—they have snakes! And she really, really, really *really* doesn't like snakes. Her family can't understand her dislike, but they can help her understand why snakes do the things they do and look the way they look. And maybe once she knows more, she will start to like snakes a little . . . or even a lot.


- ⇒ Consider something you don't like and learn about it. Does your thinking change as the facts grow? Younger students can go with buddies to read and learn together.
- ⇒ Share fears with a partner and explain why they frighten you. Listen to the fears others explain.



# Personal Awareness and Responsibility

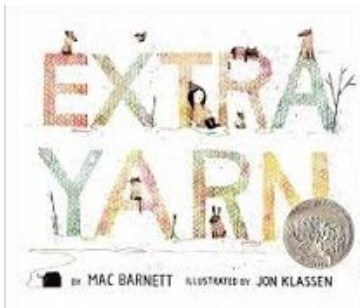
## Set of Profiles: Personal Awareness and Responsibility Competency

These profile descriptions include the three facets that underpin the Personal Awareness and Responsibility Competency: self-determination, self-regulation, and well-being. The three facets are interrelated and are embedded within the profile descriptions, which are written from a student's point of view.

PROFILE	DESCRIPTION
 1	With support, I can show a sense of accomplishment and joy, and express some wants, needs, and preferences. I can sometimes recognize emotions. I can participate in activities that support my well-being.
 2	In a safe, supportive environment, I can share my ideas and accomplishments, and accept responsibility for my actions. I can use strategies that increase my feeling of well-being and help me manage my feelings and emotions. I can connect my actions with both positive and negative consequences. I make decisions about my activities and, with support, take some responsibility for my physical and emotional well-being. I can express my wants and needs and celebrate my efforts and accomplishments.
 3	I can recognize my strengths and use strategies to focus, manage stress, and accomplish my goals. I can be focused and determined. I can set realistic goals, use strategies to accomplish them, and persevere with challenging tasks. I can tell when I am becoming angry, upset, or frustrated, and I have strategies to calm myself. I can make choices that benefit my well-being and keep me safe in my community, including my online interactions. I advocate for myself and my ideas; I accept myself.
 4	I can recognize my value and advocate for my rights. I take responsibility for my choices, my actions, and my achievements. I can set priorities; implement, monitor, and adjust a plan; and assess the results. I take responsibility for my learning, seeking help as I need it. I use strategies for working toward a healthy and balanced lifestyle, for dealing with emotional challenges, and for finding peace in stressful times. I know how to find the social support I need. I have valuable ideas to share; I can imagine and work toward change in myself and in the world.
 5	I can identify my strengths and limits, find internal motivation, and act on opportunities for self-growth. I take responsibility for making ethical decisions. I can take ownership of my goals, learning, and behaviour; I act on what is best, over time, in terms of my goals and aspirations. I recognize the implications of my choices and consult with others who may be affected by my decisions. I sustain a healthy and balanced lifestyle. I am aware of my personal journey and reflect on my experiences as a way of enhancing my well-being and dealing with challenges. I can advocate for myself in stressful situations. I take the initiative to inform myself about controversial issues and take ethical positions.



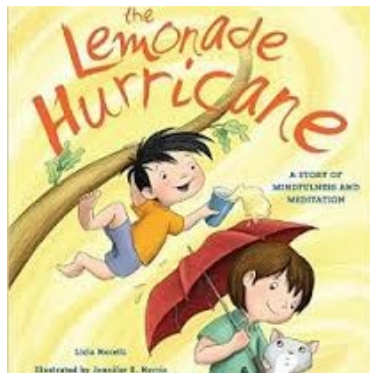
# Personal Awareness and Responsibility



## Extra yarn by Mac Barnett

*Extra Yarn*, winner of a Caldecott Honor and the *Boston Globe-Horn Book Award*, as well as a *New York Times* bestseller, is the story of how a young girl and her box of magical yarn transform a community.

- ⇒ With the help of volunteer knitters, please consider establishing a knitting club at your school. There are many scholarly articles linking knitting with positive mental health. Some knitters use their skills to provide warm articles for the homeless (EDAS) or those in need. Several schools have amazing knitting clubs going.



## The lemonade Hurricane

Emma doesn't really like hurricanes. After a busy day of school and activities, Emma likes to sit still and rest. Her little brother, Henry, does everything but. She calls him "The Lemonade Hurricane." Henry is a lot of fun when he's not storming through the house, so Emma decides to teach him how to be still. By showing him how to sit, bow, and breath, Emma is able to calm the hurricane within Henry.

- ⇒ Just as Emma discovered ways to help her brother get to a place of calm, your students can co-create a wide variety of strategies for calming down.



## My Blue is Happy by Jessica Young

Your neighbor says red is angry like a dragon's breath, but you think it's brave like a fire truck. Or maybe your best friend likes pink because it's pretty like a ballerina's tutu, but you find it annoying — like a piece of gum stuck on your shoe. In a subtle, child-friendly narrative, art teacher and debut author Jessica Young suggests that colors may evoke as many emotions as there are people to look at them — and opens up infinite possibilities for seeing the world in a wonderful new way.

- ⇒ Also read Dr. Seuss' book, *My Many Coloured Days* and *Pantone Colours* as a means to discuss colours and the emotions they convey.
- ⇒ *Pantone Colours* lends itself to a beautiful writing activity.

You may want to collect paint chips from the paint store to go along with this book!

e.g. On warm summer days when a gentle breeze blows the clouds, it's a *coconut white* kind of day.



## The Girl and the Bicycle by Mark Pett

A little girl sees a shiny new bicycle in the shop window. She hurries home to see if she has enough money in her piggy bank, but when she comes up short, she knocks on the doors of her neighbors, hoping to do their yard work. They all turn her away except for a kindly old woman.

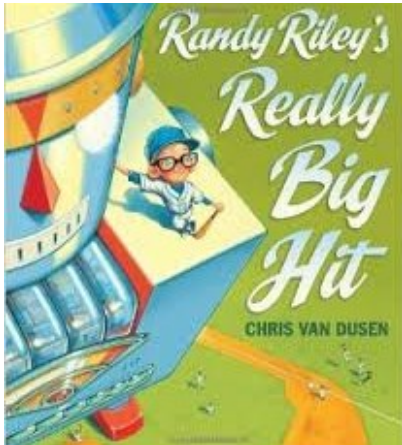
The woman and the girl work through the seasons, side by side. They form a tender friendship. When the weather warms, the girl finally has enough money for the bicycle. She runs back to the store, but the bicycle is gone! What happens next shows the reward of hard work and the true meaning of generosity.

- ⇒ What's your role within your family with your siblings? What's your role in the classroom? After reading this book, invite your students to find ways to be helpful to others.





## Personal Awareness and Responsibility



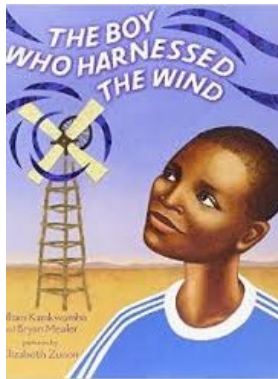
### Randy Riley's Really Big Hit by Chris Van Dusen

Randy Riley loves two things: science and baseball. When it comes to the solar system, the constellations, and all things robot, Randy is a genius. But on the baseball diamond? Not so much. He tries . . . but whiffs every time. Then, one night, Randy sees something shocking through his Space Boy telescope: it's a fireball, and it's headed right for his town! Randy does the math, summons all of his science smarts, and devises a plan that will save the day in a spectacular way.

⇒ Identify your students' talents at the beginning of the year by filling in the following ...

I'm genius at ....

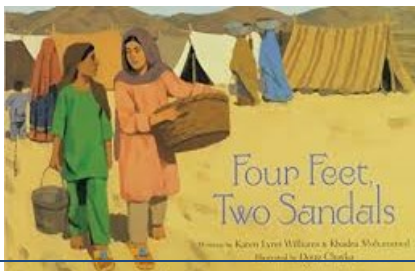
How can they use their personal talents to make a difference for themselves and the people around them.



### The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer

When fourteen-year-old William Kamkwamba's Malawi village was hit by a drought, everyone's crops began to fail. Without enough money for food, let alone school, William spent his days in the library . . . and figured out how to bring electricity to his village. Persevering against the odds, William built a functioning windmill out of junkyard scraps, and thus became the local hero who harnessed the wind.

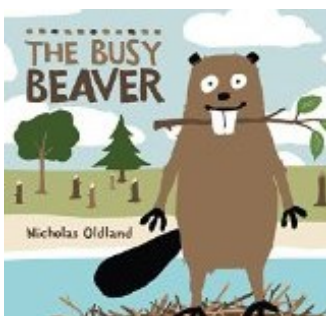
⇒ Read local newspapers to see what local needs are. From there find a way to make a difference.



### Four Feet, Two Sandals by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed

Two, young Afghani girls, living in a refugee camp in Pakistan, share a precious pair of sandals brought by relief workers.

⇒ These two girls found a way to share something precious in spite of their hardship. Help your students make deep connections to this book by inviting your students think of a time in which sharing was a challenge.



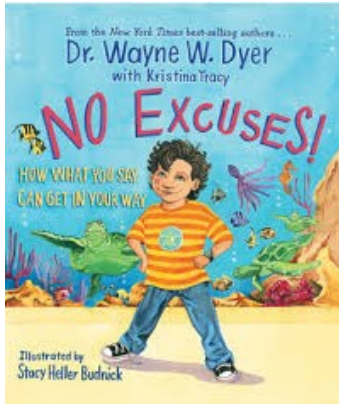
The busy but careless beaver spends his days following random impulses, rarely thinking things through and leaving in his wake a devastated forest filled with stumps, half-nibbled trees and injured, homeless animals. But then one day the beaver finds himself on the wrong side of a falling tree, which as it turns out, is just the thing to knock some sense into him. After reflecting on his behavior, he decides to make some changes. Soon, the now wiser and gentler beaver is getting down to the business of making things right, much to the delighted surprise of his forest friends.

⇒ My grade one class made a list of all the unfortunate things the Busy Beaver did.

⇒ We also wrote about how the Busy Beaver made amends. (Paulette Vaton)



# Personal Awareness and Responsibility

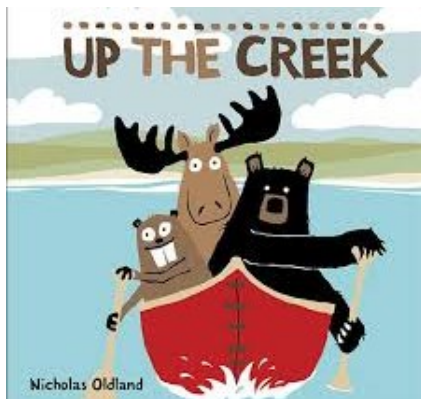


## No Excuses; How What you Say can get in Your Way

The book follows a boy with a seemingly impossible dream who almost lets excuses ("I'm not smart enough" . . . "It's too hard," and so on) get in his way.

He discovers that by following a few simple ideas and eliminating excuses . . . anything is possible!

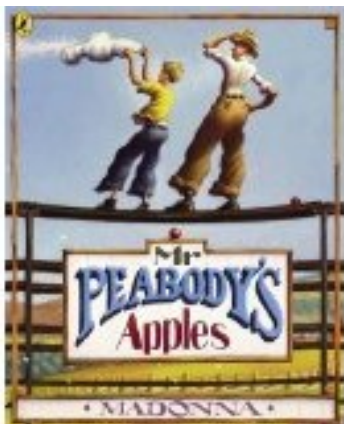
⇒ What are your dreams in life? What are the perceived obstacles? How do we overcome these hurdles. As stories are shared, we learn about strategies used by others and can develop those character traits ourselves.



## Up the Creek by Nicholas Oldland

There once was a bear, a moose and a beaver who were the best of friends, though they often disagreed. So when the three friends go canoeing together one sunny day, it doesn't take long for them to start quarreling with one another. First, they can't decide who should get to steer the canoe. Later, they debate how best to get across a beaver dam that blocks their way. But when they can't agree on the proper course for maneuvering through the white-water rapids they suddenly find themselves in, the consequences become truly perilous. It takes a long, uncomfortable night spent stranded on a rock to remind the bear, the moose and the beaver what they often forget: everything turns out better when they work together as a team. and communicate with each other.

⇒ What can we learn from this book? Even when we're all heading in the same direction, there are a variety of ways to get there. How does a group make decisions that all can live with?



## Mr. Peabody's Apples by Madonna

Tommy Tittlebottom sees Mr Peabody taking an apple from Mr Funkadeli's fruit market and is very surprised that he doesn't pay. Then Tommy sees it happen again and decides that Mr Peabody is a thief. Word spreads quickly around the town. When Mr Peabody arrives at the baseball ground, ready for the usual Saturday game, only Billy Little turns up and he soon explains what has happened. It is then up to Mr Peabody to teach Tommy about the importance of truth and the power of words.

⇒ What are the words you've spoken, you wish you could take back? This book invites an reflective journal write.

⇒ Create a poster with a slogan that reminds others that spoken words are hard to retrieve. Like a tube of toothpaste squeezed out, it's next to impossible to put back!





# Communication

## Set of Profiles: Communication Competency

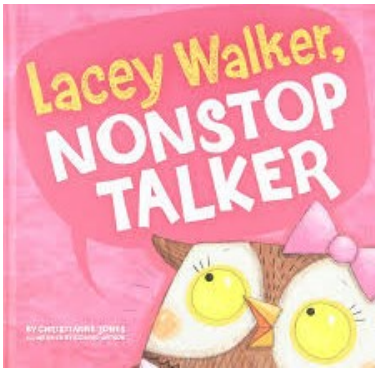
These profile descriptions include four facets that underpin Communication Competency: connect and engage with others; acquire, interpret, and present information; collaborate to plan, carry out, and review constructions and activities; and explain/recount and reflect on experiences and accomplishments. The four facets are interrelated and are embedded within the profile descriptions, which are written from a student's point of view.

PROFILE	DESCRIPTION
 1	In a safe and supported environment, I respond meaningfully to communication from peers and adults. With support, I can be part of a group.
 2	In familiar situations, with direct support, I communicate with peers and adults. I understand and share basic information about topics that are important to me. I talk and listen to people I know. I plan and complete activities with peers and adults. I can answer simple direct questions about my activities and experiences.
 3	In familiar situations, with some support or guidance, I communicate with peers and adults. I understand and share basic information about topics that are important to me, and participate in conversations for a variety of purposes (e.g., to connect, help, be friendly, learn/share). I listen and respond to others. I can work with others to achieve a short-term, concrete goal; I do my share. I can recount simple experiences and activities, and tell something I learned.
 4	I communicate with peers and adults with growing confidence, using forms and strategies I have practiced. I gather basic information I need for school tasks and for my own interests, and present it in ways I have learned. I am becoming an active listener; I ask questions and make connections. When I talk and work with peers, I express my ideas and encourage others to express theirs; I share roles and responsibilities. I recount and comment on events and experiences.
 5	I communicate clearly, in an organized way, using a variety of forms appropriately. I acquire the information I need for school tasks and for my own interests, and present it clearly. In discussions and collaborative activities, I am an engaged listener—I ask clarifying and extending questions. I share my ideas and try to connect them with others' ideas. I contribute to planning and adjusting a plan, and help to solve conflicts or challenges. I am able to represent my learning, and connect it to my experiences and efforts. I give and receive constructive feedback.
 6	I communicate confidently in organized forms that show attention to my audience and purpose. I acquire information about complex and specialized topics from various sources, and synthesize and present it with thoughtful analysis. I contribute positively to discussions and collaborations, and help to organize and monitor the work. I ask thought-provoking questions, integrate new information, support others, and help to manage conflicts. I offer detailed descriptions of my own efforts and experiences. I give, receive, and act on constructive feedback.
 7	I communicate effectively in well-constructed forms that are effective in terms of my audience and purpose. I acquire, critically analyse, and integrate well-chosen information from a range of sources. I show understanding and control of the forms and technologies I use. In discussion and collaboration, I acknowledge different perspectives, and look for commonalities. I offer both leadership and support; I am flexible and have a variety of strategies and experiences to draw on. I am able to represent my learning and my goals, and connect these to my previous experiences. I accept constructive feedback and use it to move forward.
 8	I am intentional and strategic; I am able to engage and accomplish my purpose with an increasing range of audiences, including those I do not know. I access and make strategic choices from complex and specialized information sources. I show expertise in the forms and technologies I use. I can take leadership in a discussion or collaboration, and focus on deepening or transforming our thinking. I seek consensus, and focus on collective results. I can articulate a keen awareness of my strengths, my aspirations and myself. I offer detailed analysis, using specific terminology, of my progress, work and goals.





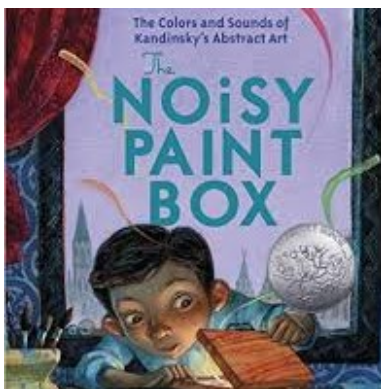
# Communication



## Lacey Walker Nonstop Talker by Christianne Jones

Lacey Walker loves to talk. She talks all day, and sometimes all night. But when she loses her voice, Lacey learns the importance of listening.

⇒ Encourage active listening. After doing a partner pair/share, have the listener share back what the listener said. **Turn and listen.**

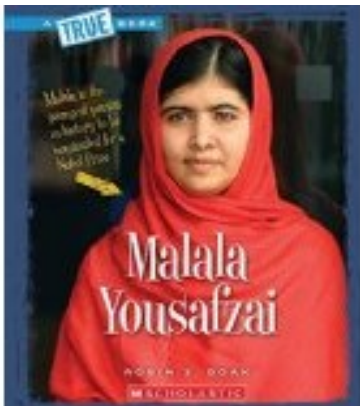


## The Noisy Paint Box by Barb Rosenstock

Vasya Kandinsky was a proper little boy: he studied math and history, he practiced the piano, he sat up straight and was perfectly polite. And when his family sent him to art classes, they expected him to paint pretty houses and flowers—like a proper artist.

But as Vasya opened his paint box and began mixing the reds, the yellows, the blues, he heard a strange sound—the swirling colors trilled like an orchestra tuning up for a symphony! And as he grew older, he continued to *hear* brilliant colors singing and see vibrant sounds dancing. But was Vasya brave enough to put aside his realistic paintings. . . ?

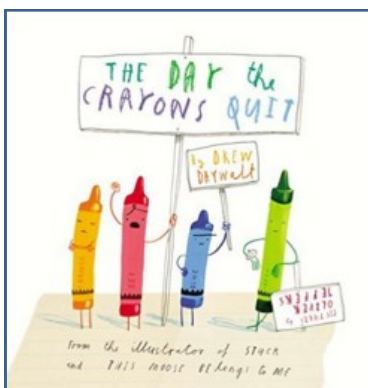
⇒ With a heart shape on 11 x 17 have students create sections. Within each section, label and draw what's in your heart.



## Malala Yousafzai by Robin S. Doak

At the age of 11, Malala Yousafzai began writing a blog in support of education for girls in Pakistan. As the blog gained popularity and Yousafzai became famous, she faced opposition from religious extremists who were against women's right to education. Readers discover how Yousafzai stood her ground against terrorist activists, even after being shot for her beliefs.

⇒ Each student considers an issue that is important. Invite them to write a one-paragraph message to convey orally to their classmates.



## The Day the Crayons Quit by Drew Daywalt

**Crayons have feelings, too!** In this funny back-to-school story Poor Duncan just wants to color. But when he opens his box of crayons, he finds only letters, all saying the same thing: His crayons have had enough! They quit! Beige Crayon is tired of playing second fiddle to Brown Crayon. Black wants to be used for more than just outlining. Blue needs a break from coloring all those bodies of water. And Orange and Yellow are no longer speaking—each believes he is the true color of the sun.

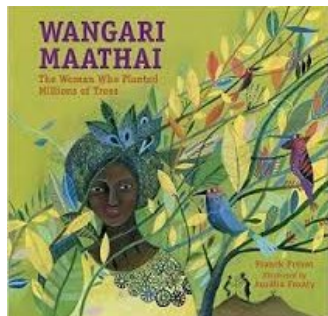
What can Duncan possibly do to appease all of the crayons and get them back to doing what they do best?

⇒ Students will have friends who are expressing their opinions, likes and dislikes and sometimes you will feel responsible for that..... but.... what are you going to do?

⇒ Using crayons, create speech and thinking bubbles (cartoons) to express the crayon's perspective and/or feelings. (An alternative way of communication than letter writing)



# Communication

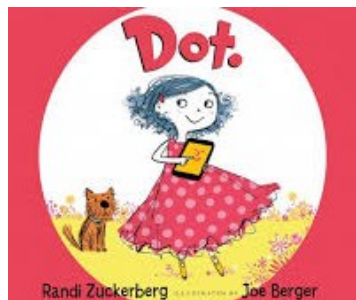


Wangari Maathai - the woman who planted millions of trees.

Wangari Maathai's organization planted over thirty million trees in thirty years. This beautiful picture book tells the story of an amazing woman and an inspiring idea.

Throughout the story Wangari had to communicate orally in written form, ideas which were important to her cause. She eventually won the Noble Peace Prize and spoke before a world audience.

- ⇒ Co-create criteria for oral communication by asking *"What's important when we speak"* (ie. enunciation, pausing, emphasis, meaning etc. Pick a paragraph (or letter to the editor) to read aloud to communicate the intent or author's message.
- ⇒ Debate. Choose a local topic to debate in pairs. One person practices persuading, the other rebuttals.

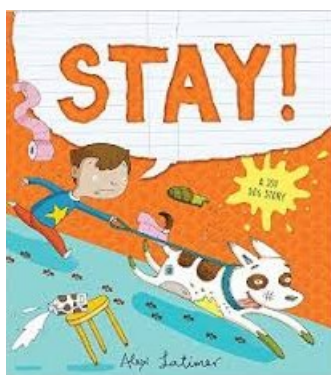


Dot by Zuckerberg

Meet Dot! She's a spunky little girl obsessed with electronic devices. Dot knows a lot. She knows how to tap . . .to swipe . . .to share. . . And she pays little attention to anything else, until one day Dot sets off on an interactive adventure with the world surrounding her.

Dot's tech-savvy expertise, mingled with her resourceful imagination, proves Dot really does know lots and lot

- ⇒ Make a list of the pros and cons of technology in our world and its affect on our ability to communicate. Within your family,

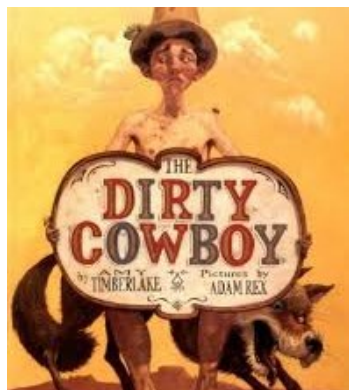


Stay! A Top Dog Story by Alex Latimer

**Grandpa is looking after Ben's mischievous dog, Buster. Who will be top dog?**

Looking after Ben's dog, Buster, is no walk in the park. Buster is messy, he is naughty, he is EXHAUSTING! But Ben loves him more than anything. When Ben goes away, he tells Grampa exactly how to look after Buster. But has Ben remembered the most IMPORTANT thing?

- ⇒ Create a list of instructions for somebody. Take a topic of passion or great interest and compose a procedurally list. Ex. How to wash a mountain bike after a ride. Getting gear ready for a triathlon. How to take your dog for a walk.



The Dirty Cowboy by Amy Timberlake


After he finds a tumbleweed in his chaps and the numerous bugs buzzing around him affect his hearing, the cowboy decides it's time to head to the river. Once there, he peels off all his clothes and tells his trusty old dog to guard them against strangers. He takes a refreshing bath and emerges clean as corn - but so fresh-smelling that his dog doesn't recognize him! Negotiations over the return of the clothes prove fruitless. A wrestling match ensues in a tale that grows taller by the sentence, climaxing in a fabric-speckled dust devil.

- ⇒ There are many ways to communicate and interpret the world around us. In groups make charts, using words and labels, to show all the ways people communicate messages. Give your students hints: If the dog had used other means to interpret the message he might have realized it was his owner (i.e body language, voice, strut or walk as opposed to just smell)



## Set of Profiles: Social Responsibility Competency

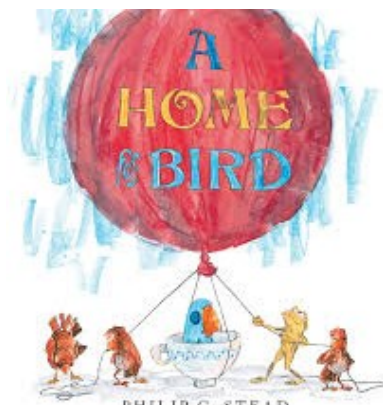
These profile descriptions include the four facets that underpin the Social Responsibility Competency: contributing to community and caring for the environment, solving problems in peaceful ways, valuing diversity, and building relationships. The four facets are interrelated and are embedded within the profile descriptions, which are written from a student's point of view.

PROFILE	DESCRIPTION
 1	<p>I am aware that other people can be different than I am.</p> <p>I can interact with my friends. With some support, I can be part of a group.</p>
 2	<p>In familiar and structured settings, I can interact with others and the environment respectfully.</p> <p>I can participate in classroom and group activities to improve the classroom, school, community, or natural world. I can share my feelings and listen to others' views. I can solve some problems myself and can identify when to ask for help. With some direction, I can demonstrate respectful and inclusive behaviour, including online. I can identify when something is unfair to me or others. I can identify when others need help. I am kind to others, can work or play co-operatively, and can build relationships with people of my choosing.</p>
 3	<p>I can interact with others and the environment respectfully and thoughtfully.</p> <p>I contribute to group activities that make my classroom, school, community, or natural world a better place. I can identify small things I can do that could make a difference. I can consider others' views and express a different opinion in a peaceful way. I can identify problems and compare potential problem-solving strategies. I can demonstrate respectful and inclusive behaviour, including online. I can explain why something is unfair. I can identify when others need support and provide it. I can build and sustain relationships. I show care for elders.</p>
 4	<p>I can take purposeful action to support others and the environment.</p> <p>I can identify how my actions and the actions of others affect my community and the natural environment and can work to make positive change. I can identify different perspectives on an issue. I can clarify problems, consider alternatives, and evaluate strategies. I respect differences, and demonstrate respectful and inclusive behaviour, including online. I can advocate for others. I am aware of how others may feel and take steps to help them feel included. I maintain relationships with people from different generations.</p>
 5	<p>I can initiate positive, sustainable change for others and the environment.</p> <p>I can analyze complex social or environmental issues from multiple perspectives. I can take thoughtful actions to influence positive, sustainable change. I can clarify problems or issues, generate multiple strategies, weigh consequences, compromise to meet the needs of others, and evaluate actions. I take action to support diversity and defend human rights, and can identify how diversity is beneficial for my community, including online. I build and sustain positive relationships with diverse people, including people from different generations. I show empathy for others and adjust my behaviour to accommodate their needs.</p>





## Social Responsibility



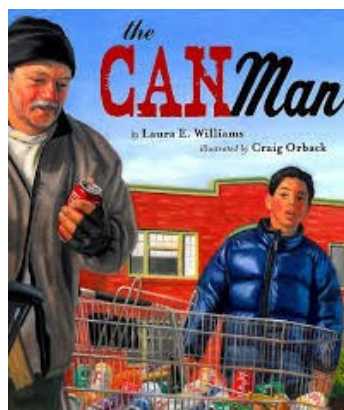
### A Home for Bird by Stead

While out foraging for interesting things, Vernon the toad finds a new friend - a small blue bird who is curiously silent. Vernon shows Bird the river and the forest and some of his other favorite things, but Bird says nothing. Vernon introduces Bird to his friends, Skunk and Porcupine, but Bird still says nothing.

"Bird is shy," says Vernon, "but also a very good listener."

Vernon worries that Bird is silent because he misses his home, so the two set off on a journey to help find a home for Bird.

⇒ Think like a particular animal and delve into their needs for shelter; draw or build a home to meet their

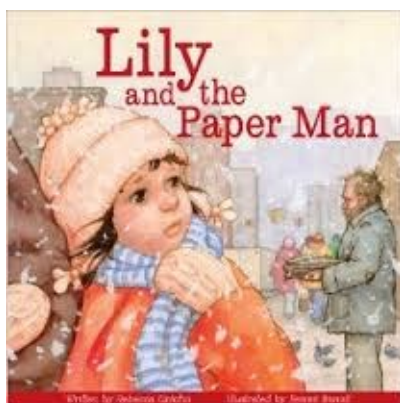


### The Can Man by Laura Williams

Tim's birthday is just a week away, and more than anything he wants a skateboard. But money is tight, and Tim knows his family cannot afford to buy him a board.

As Tim ponders how he might earn money for a skateboard, he hears The Can Man down the street collecting empty soft drink cans. The clang of the cans in the homeless man's cart gives Tim an idea. He will collect cans too, and cash them in for the redemption money. By the end of the week, Tim has almost reached his goal-until a couple of chance encounters with The Can Man change everything

⇒ Invite a community member into the classroom to shed light on the homeless in our area. Invite students to think of ways to help.



### Lily and the Paper Man by Rebecca Upjohn

Walking home with her mother one day, Lily runs into a gruff and untidy-looking man selling papers on the street. Lily is afraid of the man, but when the weather turns cold, she sees the Paper Man differently.

⇒ How do we balance our own needs for safety and the needs of others in our community? After delving into this issue (homelessness), find ways to become involved. More and more schools are involved with EDAS (Everyone Deserves a Smile) in which gift bags with personal hygiene products and warm items are distributed within the Valley and lower mainland.



## Social Responsibility

### THE SMALLEST GIRL IN THE SMALLEST GRADE



written by  
JUSTIN ROBERTS

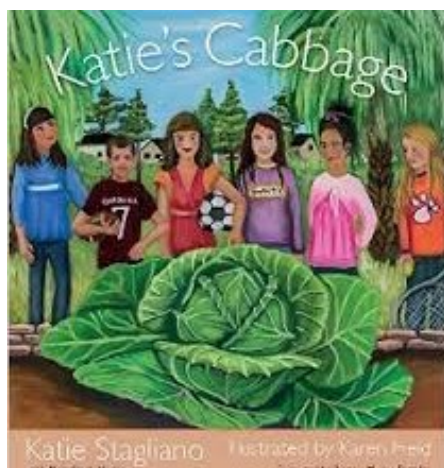
illustrated by  
CHRISTIAN ROBINSON

The Smallest Girl in the Smallest Grade by Justin Roberts

*Hardly anyone noticed young Sally McCabe.  
She was the smallest girl in the smallest grade.*

But Sally notices everything—from the twenty-seven keys on the janitor's ring to the bullying happening on the playground. One day, Sally has had enough and decides to make herself heard. And when she takes a chance and stands up to the bullies, she finds that one small girl can make a big difference

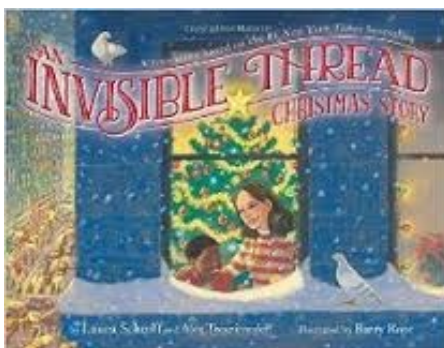
⇒ Invite students to carefully observe interactions during recess time. From there design ways to intervene and make positive improvements. At one of our Elementary schools, for example, they have the Buddy Bench. It was developed because it was noticed that some children had a hard time initiating play with others. The bench signals, I want to play. Please ask me. Other creative strategies exist. What are they?



Katie's Cabbage by Katie Stagliano

Katie's Cabbage is the inspirational true story of how Katie Stagliano, a third grader from Summerville, South Carolina, grew a forty-pound cabbage in her backyard and donated it to help feed 275 people at a local soup kitchen. In her own words, Katie shares the story of the little cabbage seedling and the big ideas of generosity and service that motivated her to turn this experience into Katie's Krops, a national youth movement aimed at ending hunger one vegetable garden at a time. Katie's Cabbage reminds us of how small things can grow and thrive when nurtured with tender loving and care and of how one person, with the support of family, friends, and community, can help make a powerful difference in the lives of so many.

⇒ The competencies can be covered nicely with a school garden! Produce can be used to educate others about nutrition and of course, it can be given to others!



Invisible Thread Christmas Story

*An Invisible Thread* is the true, heartfelt, and extraordinary story of how one woman's decision to help a boy on the street changed both of their lives forever.

*New York Times* bestselling author Laura Schroff tells the remarkable story of her lifelong friendship with a boy named Maurice who she met on the street while he was asking for change in her book, *An Invisible Thread*.

Now, in this sweet picture book, Laura retells the first Christmas that she and Maurice spent together. She shares how Maurice gave her a small white bear and, as she later learns, the only thing he had that he could truly call his own—to show her how grateful he was for their friendship. This heartwarming tale captures the true meaning of the holidays and will be one you'll want to share with your family year after year as a reminder that a gift from the heart is always the best present under the tree.

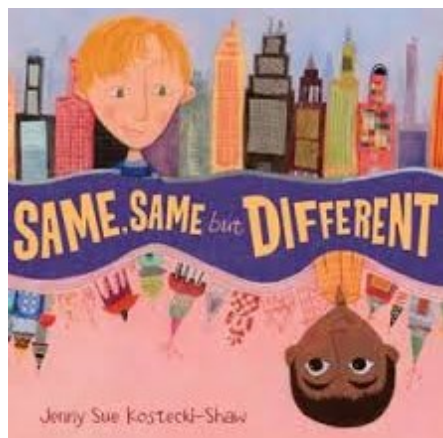
⇒ What gifts can you give to your family at Christmas that really mean the most? Put our brains together, then create!

⇒ Add personal touches to the Christmas hampers that classes put together at Christmas time.





## Social Responsibility

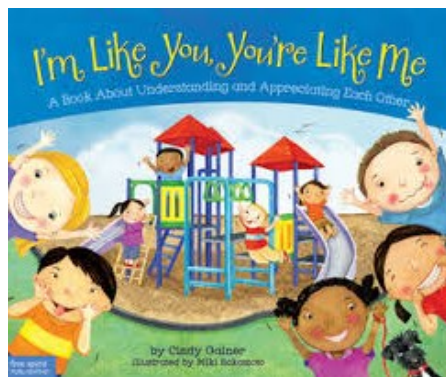


### Same, Same, But Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw

Elliot lives in America, and Kailash lives in India. They are pen pals. By exchanging letters and pictures, they learn that they both love to climb trees, have pets, and go to school. Their worlds might look different, but they are actually similar. Same, same. But different!

Through an inviting point-of-view and colorful, vivid illustrations, this story shows how two boys living oceans apart can be the best of friends.

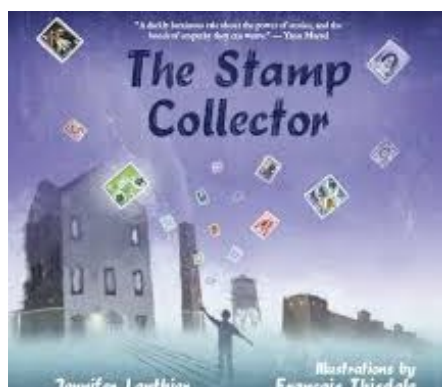
- ⇒ By understanding the notion of sameness, there's a greater chance of emotional connectedness and responsiveness to others. They may be in our community or around the world.
- ⇒ The app, "Newsela" offers current events in 5 different reading levels. Find articles on the Syrian refugee crisis or other current events and ask, "What do these events inspire me to do?"



### I'm Like You, You're Like Me by Cindy Gainer

"It's fun to find ways I'm like you and you're like me. It's fun to find ways we're different." In this colourful, inviting book, kids from preschool to lower elementary learn about diversity in terms they can understand: hair that's straight or curly, families with many people or few bodies that are big or small. With its wide-ranging examples and fun, high detailed art, *I'm Like You, You're Like Me* helps kids appreciate the ways they are alike and affirm their individual differences.

- ⇒ A two-page adult section in the back provides tips and activities for parents and caregivers to reinforce the themes and lessons of the book.



### The Stamp Collector by Jennifer Lanthier

A city boy finds a stamp that unlocks his imagination; a country boy is captivated by stories. When they grow up, the two boys take different paths—one becomes a prison guard, the other works in a factory—but their early childhood passions remain. When the country boy's stories of hope land him in prison, the letters and stamps sent to him from faraway places intrigue the prison guard and a unique friendship begins.

- ⇒ This is a complex story best suited to students in grade 6 and up. Challenge students to match this story with a period in history and place in the world where freedom of speech was at jeopardy. Compare to the UN Rights of the Child and the Constitutional Rights Canadians enjoy.