



Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility

The 4Rs

Reading, Writing, Respect & Resolution

Teaching Guide 2

Updated Units 1 & 2

The 4Rs
(Reading Writing Respect and Resolution)
Grade 2 Units 1 and 2
Updated and Formatted for Remote Learning

The 4Rs / (Reading Writing Respect and Resolution) ®

Original units written by Maxine Phillips and Tom Roderick

Units 1 and 2

Updated and formatted for remote learning

These units are updated versions of The 4Rs, Unit 1 Building Community, and Unit 2 Understanding and Dealing with Feelings. The 4Rs updates were written by Marieke van Woerkom with input from Jonah Braverman, Victoria Cheng-Gorini, Daniel Coles, Ava Daniel, Ellen Ferrin, Jenny Seaquist, and Tala Manassah.

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Table of Contents

Unit 1: Building Community: Developing a Vision 5
 The Big Orange Splot, by Daniel Manus Pinkwater. Scholastic Inc., 1977.
 6

Lessons to Foster Building Community 11

 Lesson 1 11

 Lesson 2 13

 Lesson 3 16

 Lesson 4 19

 Lesson 5 22

 Lesson 6 25

 Lesson 7 28

 Lesson 8 31

 Lesson 9 34

 Suggested Books for further exploration:..... 37

Understanding & Dealing with Feelings 38

We Are Best Friends, by Alik. Mulberry Books, an imprint of William
 Morrow, 1982. 39

Unit 2: Lessons to Help Understand, Name and Deal with Feelings 42

 Lesson 1 42

 Lesson 2 45

 Lesson 3 47

Lesson 4 50

Lesson 5 53

Best Friends Together Again, by Alik. Greenwillow, 1995. 56

Songsheets & Handouts are in a separate file.

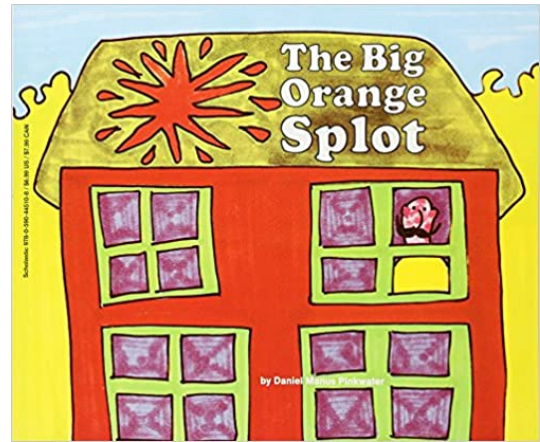
Unit 1:

Building Community: Developing a Vision

Book selection: *The Big Orange Splot* by Daniel Manus Pinkwater

Activities

1. Envisioning our dream community
2. Community Agreements
3. Name Banner
4. Similarities and Differences
5. Good Listening
6. Think differently
7. Thankful Activity / Flowers
8. Affirmations (SELF)
9. Affirmations / Put-Ups (OTHERS)



Literacy & SEL Ideas and Skills in this Unit:

Literacy	
Ideas	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plot development How a writer builds tension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Predicting Identifying the main idea Figuring out words in context
Social and Emotional Learning	
Ideas	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyzing the problem Cooperation for short-term goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming Asking for help Working together Listening

The Big Orange Splot, by Daniel Manus Pinkwater. Scholastic Inc., 1977.

Summary

Mr. Plumbean lives on a street where all the houses look the same. Everyone likes it that way. All the residents say, “This is a neat street.” Mr. Plumbean, too, thinks he likes everything neat and the same. But then one day a seagull drops a can of orange paint on his roof, leaving a big orange splot on it. The neighbors ask him to paint over it, and he agrees, but to everyone’s surprise, he doesn’t paint it the same color as his neighbors’. In fact, once he starts to paint, he goes hog wild, turning his look-alike abode into a jungle fantasy. Horrified, the neighbors send a representative to talk some sense into him. Soon that person, who always loved boats, has transformed his house so that it looks like an ocean liner. One by one, the residents of the block talk with Mr. Plumbean and discover what their own secret desires are. They learn that they can fulfill them and still have a good community. It may not be as neat as before, but, as they tell strangers, “Our street is us and we are it. Our street is where we like to be, and it looks like all our dreams.”

Comment

This story raises a key issue about the formation of community. How much of ourselves do we have to give up when we live in community? We understand that there are rules and procedures. We may like the safety of the group, of knowing how things “should be.” But our hearts may also long to express our individuality. We may think that only artists or people living outside the norms of general society can express their individuality. This book holds out the idea that all people can live their dreams. Mr. Plumbean may not have been able to leave his job to live on a tropical island, but he could arrange his reality so that he felt as if he were on an island. The question of group conformity and individuality is one that students face constantly as they negotiate “in” groups and “out” groups. The tension between conformity to standards and norms and the need to express individuality is one that students will have to negotiate throughout their lives.

We can look at other books in which characters realized their dreams in other ways. We can talk about our class, our school, our neighborhoods, our families, and what we have to do to be a part of these communities. How is Mr. Plumbean able to stay a part of the community and still keep his dream?

Book Talk

Read-aloud: Pull up the video link [The Big Orange Splot](#); or if you prefer and have a hard copy, use it!

Previewing the book

Consider one of the two following options, a. if you have the book you can do your own read aloud and book talk following the directions below, and b. if you don't have the book, pull up on your shared screen the video of the read aloud for students to watch.

Option a: Look at the cover of this book. Ask the students what they notice about the drawing. First show them the front cover. What do they think the story is about? Have they ever heard the word “splot”? Do they think that the author made it up? What could it be a combination of? Now show them the back cover. Does this picture change their idea of what the book is about?

Point out that the author uses phrases that are called figures of speech. Some of these will be familiar, others will not. These figures of speech describe actions or people in ways that give us a vivid picture. For instance, if we say that a person is happier than a pig in mud, we know that the person is very happy. People often use these figures of speech in speech rather than in writing. However, here the author uses them repetitively to make a point. We will try to guess the meaning of the figures of speech from the context. He also uses similes, which is saying that one thing is like another. For instance, the rumble of the subway was like thunder.

Reading and responding to the book

Invite students to get ready for the read aloud. Ask them, how and where can they sit so that they can be focused. How can you help them stay focused?

Read the book slowly, giving the students time to look at the pictures. Stop occasionally and ask the students what is happening or what they think will happen next, referring to parts of the text when useful. Ask for their interpretations of unfamiliar words. What meaning do they infer from them?

Option b: Play the video of the read aloud of [The Big Orange Splot](#), read by Bits. Instruct students to pay special attention to the illustrations and what happens to the houses on the street over the course of the story. Also ask them to pay attention to the language used. Are there words that they are not familiar with?

After you have finished reading the story or the video is done playing, ask the children what they want to say about this story. What interested them? Do they have any questions?

Deepening students' understanding of the book

Ask the students to re-tell the story in their own words. Some students may talk about the unusual houses and the way that the whole neighborhood changed. They may mention the importance of believing in your dream. The ideas we want to draw out in this unit have to do with the conflict or tension between being the same as other people or being different. In groups or communities, there's often pressure for people to dress the same, act the same, talk the same. If somebody is or dares to be different, people may get upset, as they did in the story.

As we work to create a class community, *The Big Orange Splot* raises questions for us: What do we need to create a kind, welcoming, and supportive community? In what ways can we be different from others in our community? How can each of us express our special gifts and interests while being part of a community? Think about what it means to be brave enough to be different?

Ask students to share their thoughts about these questions by writing them down and illustrating their writing. Then discuss their thoughts and art with the rest of the class.

You may want to suggest that all groups have certain rules to guide their members. Often these rules are not written down, but people know what they are. Why do communities have rules? What were the rules for Mr. Plumbean's block? How did the rules change in the course of the story? How did the change come about? Where would you rather live? On the block as it was at the beginning of the story or at the end? Why?

Ask the students to keep the questions above in mind during the second reading/showing of the story.

Ask the students to recall figures of speech from the story. List them on the board. During the second reading/showing, they should pay attention to the figures of speech, looking out especially for any not yet included on the list.

In preparation for the second reading, ask the students also to pay particular attention to the colorful writing and to the character development. How did Plumbean change? How did the neighbors change? How does the author keep us engaged in the story with his figures of speech? On p. 9, Plumbean looks at the splot for a long time. What do we think he is thinking? On p. 20 he sits with each neighbor and talks all night long. What are they talking about? We can notice the similes on p. 11 ("like a rainbow. . .like a jungle. . .like an explosion"). Figures of speech abound here. Plumbean has "popped his cork, flipped his wig, blown his stack . . . lost his marbles [and has] . . . bees in his bonnet, bats in his belfry, and knots in his noodle." The author may have made up some of these phrases. Others are fairly common. They convey both the idea of someone who is eccentric and someone who is angry (perhaps after years of conformity?).

Connecting the book to students' lives

Discussion: Ask the students if they can recall a time when they got the message that they should act like everyone else even though they actually felt or thought differently. (For example, your favorite ice cream is strawberry but all the other kids like chocolate, so you pretend to like chocolate too. Or you pretend to like a TV show that you don't really like because your friends are always talking about it. Or you're with a group of kids who say they don't like a certain child and you say nothing or pretend you agree even though you think the child they're putting down is okay.)

Writing: Following the discussion of going along with the crowd, ask students to write about a time they remember acting like everyone else even though they felt differently. Ask for volunteers to read their writing to the group and discuss. Remind the students not to use names of anyone in the class or who might be known to class members.

Think of a neighbor you are glad to live near. Make a list of why this adult or child is a good neighbor. What is special to you about this person? What kind of neighbor are you? Make a list of what is special about you that you bring to your neighborhood.

Ask the students to recall the similes and figures of speech from the book. List them on the board. "Ask students if they know other figures of speech, especially positive ones, to counter some of those in the book." Create a poster with any daily expressions that students hear at home or around that are similes or figures of speech.

Role-play

One after another, the neighbors go to Mr. Plumbean intending to convince him to keep his house the same as theirs. Instead, after all-night conversations, they decide to follow Plumbean's lead and transform their houses to express their dreams. Ask the students to think about what the neighbors might have told Mr. Plumbean to try to convince him to keep his house the same as theirs. Give them a minute to think and jot down some ideas on paper.

Explain that you'll now play the role of Mr. Plumbean and that you'll have different neighbors come by to try to convince you to change your house. Invite several volunteers to bring their arguments to you, one after the other.

Next have students think instead what Mr. Plumbean might have told his neighbors to convince them to transform their houses to express their dreams. Give students another minute to think and jot down some ideas on paper.

Explain that you'll now play the role of a neighbor and that you'll have different students play Mr. Plumbean to convince you to transform your house to express your dreams. Invite several volunteers to bring their arguments to you, this time as Mr. Plumbean.

After the students have presented their case, discuss. What are the strongest arguments you heard on each side? Would Plumbean be able to convince you? What about the neighbors? What tone of voice would they need to use? Were they respectful and kind? Were they good listeners as well?

Lessons to Foster Building Community

Lesson 1

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identify similarities and differences between Mr. Plumbean's neighborhood and the classroom; express their dreams by drawing "dream houses." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agenda to share with students blank document to record what students share drawing paper and markers or crayons

Gathering: Name Game

Make sure all students have their cameras and microphones on. Choose an object and show it to your students. Describe how it feels: is it light or heavy, soft or hard, does it have texture, etc. Start by having the students practice the activity together. Pretend to throw the object to the group and have them all pretend that they are catching it in their hands. Now, explain that they'll each get a turn when their name is called. Call a child's name and pretend to throw them the object. When the child catches it, the whole group says "hello _____" (the child's name) with enthusiasm. Have the child call your name as they throw the pretend object back to you. Repeat the process with all the children so that all have a chance to catch and throw the pretend object, as they're welcomed by their classmates.



Note: When first introducing the game, you may want to scaffold the activity as described above. As students catch on, share a "name order" for them to follow as they toss the object from one student to the next, using names. For a next phase still have students choose who they want to throw the object to by calling their classmate's name. Instruct the students to make sure everyone is included.

Check agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda.

Envisioning our dream community

Make a T-chart for all to see. Ask for ideas for one column on how our class is like the neighborhood portrayed in the story. In the next column, write down ideas of how it is different. Discuss: Does the story give us ideas about how we'd like our class to be?

Drawing Our Houses; Drawing Our Dreams

Mr. Plumbean had a dream that he expressed in the way he decorated his house. Ask the children, What are your dreams? If you could be anything you wanted, what would you be? Ask them to draw houses that express their dreams. Have them share their drawings with the class and describe the dream.

Ask students, with the help of a family member if needed, to upload their drawing so that you can create a mural of "Our Dream Community" to display. Explain that the display is a vision of the way we want our class community to be.

Reflection

What was most fun for you about today's lesson? Ask for a couple of volunteers to share their thoughts with the group.

Closing: Rhythmic Clapping

End with a simple group exercise in rhythmic clapping. It could be something like this: Clap your hands down on your knees twice. Clap your hands together twice. Clap your knees again twice. Clap your hands together once. Demonstrate for the class. Then practice with them until they can all do it together. If they catch on quickly and interest is high, introduce more complicated patterns.

Lesson 2

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work together • listen to directions • talk about and create community agreements • do a breathing activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda to share with students • a blank document to record what students share

Gathering: Rainstorm

Explain to the students that together they are going to make a rainstorm. Ask students, what kinds of sounds do you hear in a rainstorm? Does the rainstorm begin loudly or quietly? Does the rainstorm end loudly or quietly? What happens in the middle of a rainstorm?

Decide if you want students to sit or stand. Then, ask students to watch you carefully, and listen to directions, as you invite them to mirror your actions:

1. Rub your palms together
2. Snap your fingers or open and close them like an alligator
3. Clap with your three middle fingers
4. Pat your hands on your laps or cross and pat your arms
5. Clap your hands loudly
6. Stomp your feet on the ground or pat their table
7. Reverse the steps to end the storm

Elicit and discuss how wonderful it was that they all worked together and how it wouldn't have sounded as good if only one of them was doing the sounds. We were all needed to make the storm together! The same is true in our class.

Check Agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda.

Class Community Agreements

Explain to the students that so far in The 4Rs, we have been talking about community. Today we'll explore the idea of how to work together in our new remote class community.

Say that it's important for our class community to have agreements—agreements about best ways to work together to build a kind, caring and safe class community.

Give students a minute to think about how they behave at home. How are they expected to treat their brothers and sisters? How about their parents? And what about their friends? Why do they think that is? How do people show us that they care? What can people do or say to make us feel welcome? Give students a chance to share their ideas.

Explain that we're now going to think about our class community. Ask:

- What can we do to show others we care about them in our class?
- What can you do to show someone you care about what they say?
- What are some things we can do to make sure everyone feels welcome?
- Are there any community agreements we want to add when thinking about what happened with Mr. Plumbean and his neighbors?
- How did Mr. Plumbean and his neighbors handle their disagreements?

Elicit around six key actions and record what students say, for example,

- Listen to each other
- Take turns
- Be kind
- Be patient
- Talk things out when disagreements arise
- Respect each other's ideas

Next, ask students to give a thumbs up or down, if they agree with these actions for building a helping and caring class community. If anyone disagrees, have a conversation about why and consider reframing any action as needed for agreement to be possible.



Note: Go over the agreements with your students regularly, as part of the 4Rs lessons, to review them and make sure you are all still doing what we agreed to. Ask students how they're doing with the existing agreements and if other agreements need to be added.

Reflection

Why is it important to work well as a group? Ask for a couple of volunteers to share their thoughts with the group.

Closing: Balloon Breathing

Ask students to put their hands on their belly. Then ask them to take a deep breath in through their nose as they make their bellies bigger, like a balloon blowing up. Breathe out through their mouth, pursing their lips, making a swoosh sound, as their bellies get smaller. Repeat five times. Ask some volunteers what that was like for them.



Note: A few deep breaths, at different times during the day will pay off in a calmer, more focused class. And you'll be developing in your students a habit and skill that will serve them well throughout their lives. agreements need to be added.

Lesson 3

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn more about each other's names • Learn more about each other • Learn the importance of names 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda to share with students • drawing paper and markers or crayons

Gathering: Follow the Leader

Explain to the students that you want them to copy (mirror) the things that you'll be doing. Start with simple movements that you know your students can easily replicate, like clapping or shaking your hands, marching in place, etc. As your movements get gradually more complex, continue to check in with students, slowing down and giving them more detailed directions as needed.

Consider the following movements but add your own movements, as you recognize your own and your students' needs and limitations:

- Clap your hands
- Shake your hands as if shaking off excess water
- Walk in place
- Now march in place, lifting your knees, start swinging your arms
- Slow things down: Continue swinging your arms, but in slow motion and slow down your marching too
- Now, imagine your feet now being firmly rooted into the ground, shoulder-width apart
- Sway from side to side like a tree
- Now twist slowly from side to side from your core
- Bend your body down to touch your toes, slowly, making sure to keep your knees bent
- Now loosen those roots, hop little hops, and gradually getting further off the ground
- Next jump from side to side
- Walk on your tippy toes
- Stomp your feet and ball your fists
- Pretend you're flying like a bird

At any point, you may turn things over to your students, so that **students take the lead** in showing a movement that they want other students to reflect back at them. Continue the activity while interest is high. And as you start wrapping up, slow down the actions, making them smaller and quieter.

End with actions like:

- Try to stand as still and quietly as you can for 10 seconds
- Take a slow, deep breath into your belly, and relax your belly as you breathe out
- Pretend to go to sleep/sleep like a baby
- Slowly sit back up and try to yawn, looking at all the other friends on our screen (This may help everyone to yawn together)
- Take some deep breaths, do some stretches, and see how you're feeling right now
- Show on your face how you are feeling right now

Ask students:

1. What did you like best about the activity?
2. What was easy about the activity? What was hard?
3. Which movements did you like best? Why?
4. How did the activity make you feel?
5. Can you tell how other students might be feeling?

Check Agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda.

Name Banner

Explain to students that next we will be creating a banner. A banner is usually a long strip of cloth that has something written or drawn on it to show something important to a group of people. We will be using a piece of paper to create our banners today. Have each child write their first name (and possible nicknames they are known by and like) in large letters with markers or crayons at the center of a sheet of paper.

Have students decorate the name banner with designs or drawings of favorite people, pets, places, foods, and other things that are important to them and make them feel good. They can also draw a picture about their name, why they like their name or something else they like about themselves. Students can add words that describe some of the things that are harder to draw as well.

When the banners are done, give children the opportunity to share their banners with the class. If some students don't share today, make time in a future lesson.

Ask students to upload their drawing so that you can create a slideshow and share it with the entire class. Ask a family member for help if needed.

When students have all had a chance to share their banners, ask them how they feel about their names.

Do they know any stories of their names? Why they were given their names? What, if anything, is the meaning of their name? Who gave it to them? Do they have nicknames that they like, dislike? How do they feel when someone doesn't say their name right or uses a nickname that they don't like? Do they tell them how to say it correctly, or to stop using the nickname? How does it make your students feel when someone makes an effort to learn their name, to say and spell it correctly?

Based on stories the students tell of their names, ask: Why are our names so important?

Reflection

Did you learn anything new about anyone in the class? Did you make a connection with someone who had the same, or similar, things on their banner as you?

Explain to students that sharing information and telling stories about ourselves builds community. These are the first steps we will take to build a unique, diverse, caring community.

Closing: Follow the Leader, Take 2

Repeat the "follow the leader" activity from the gathering to wrap up our lesson. Make sure to end with actions that help students slow down and quiet their bodies, like:

- Try to stand as still and quietly as you can for 10 seconds
- Take a slow, deep breath into your belly, and relax your belly as you breathe out
- Pretend to go to sleep/sleep like a baby
- Slowly sit back up and try to yawn, looking at all the other friends on our screen (This may help everyone to yawn together)
- Take some deep breaths, do some stretches, and see how you're feeling right now
- Finally add a smile, a wave or a movement that expresses our community agreements.

Lesson 4

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> notice similarities and differences between themselves and their classmates; become more aware of similarities and differences among people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agenda to share with students drawing paper and markers or crayons index card or small piece of paper timer journal and pencil, pen or marker

Gathering: Attribute Linking

Explain that an attribute is a “quality or feature” that is characteristic to someone (or something). In this activity we’ll be looking at our own attributes and preferences. Explain that you’ll be calling out different attributes and preferences that *if true* for your students, they will give a thumbs-up. For example, if you call out “summer is my favorite season” students will give a thumbs-up if that’s true for them. Give students a moment to look around to see who has their thumbs up for summer. Cycle through all 4 seasons in this way giving all students the opportunity to indicate their favorite season and look around for commonalities. Ask a few volunteers to share out why they prefer summer, fall, winter, spring over the other seasons. Continue the activity with other attributes or preferences, like favorite foods, sports, music, kind of shoes they’re wearing, number of children in their family, where students live, what language(s) they speak at home, etc. As students catch on, consider having them come up with additional attributes or preferences.

Consider wrapping up the activity by asking how it relates to *The Big Orange Splot?* Summarize what students share and touch on that we can have different attributes and we can prefer different things, but we can still be one community.

Check agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda.

Alike and Different

Introduce this activity by referring back to the student's name banners from last time. Explain to students that next, we will be looking at our physical characteristics. Ask them to take a look at you? What do they notice? Elicit the children's observations about your (the teacher's) physical characteristics (for example, skin color, hair color/style, eye shape/color, clothing) compared to their own.

Ask, how are you the same/different from your students? Invite several volunteers to share out.

Next have students look at the screen with all their classmates' faces. Have students work on creating a list of similarities and differences by closely observing their classmates. Tell students that this is a silent activity. Give them 2 minutes to jot down their observations in the journals.

After 2 minutes give several volunteers a chance to share out the similarities and differences they noticed. Before sharing out, consider reviewing community agreements for students to reflect on ways to respectfully talk about similarities and differences.

Reflection

Encourage the students to reflect on the exercise by asking, How was this activity for you? Was it easy or hard to notice your class-mates' similarities and differences? Why? What are some ways people in our class are similar? What are some ways we're different? What did it feel like to talk about similarities and differences? What did it feel like hearing them? Why do you think that is? Revisit, add, edit or reaffirm community agreements as needed.

Closing: Remote High Five

Everyone raises one hand to high five everyone else on screen on the count of three.



Note: When first introducing the game, you may want to scaffold it as described above. Next, share a "name order" for students to follow as they high five the next student in line, using their name. Finally, have students choose who they want to high five, calling their classmate's name.

Extension Activity

Drawing and Writing: Ask students, Think of a time you were with people who were all like you? (Examples can include same-sex events, being with a religious, cultural, or ethnic group, being with a same-age group.) Draw what that was like and write a few things you liked about it. Next, draw a (positive) experience of being with a group that was different from you. Again provide students with examples. Again have them write a few things they liked about *this* experience. Back in class, invite several students to share out their drawings and stories of sameness and difference. Chart what students like about being with groups that are the same and different.

Lesson 5

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify behaviors that make for poor listening; • identify behaviors that make for good listening; • develop a chart of guidelines for good listening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda to share with students • blank document to record students' "Guidelines for Good Listening" • puppets

Gathering: Cooper Says*

Introduce the game Cooper Says. ("Cooper" comes from cooperation.) Explain that the game is like Simon Says. Elicit from the students what the rules of Simon Says are and explain that with Simon Says the leader ("Simon") will give a set of instructions, like "put your hands on your head," or "rub your belly" or "take a deep breath." These instructions should be followed, **only** if it's prefaced with the phrase "Simon Says." If the leader doesn't start the instructions with "Simon Says" children are to ignore the instructions. Children are out (have to stop/leave the game) if they a. follow instructions anyway, or b. fail to follow the "Simon Says" instructions. You may ask students at this point in the explanation, what it feels like to be out. Most of the children will agree that it doesn't feel good.

The good news is that in "Cooper Says," even when we make mistakes, we're not out. We get another chance. Explain that we all make mistakes in real life as well and that we can learn from our mistakes if we're given that chance. "Cooper Says" is all about that.

Start the game of "Cooper Says" and keep it going while interest is high. With time, have different students lead the game by becoming Cooper.

You might need to remind the children that people aren't out if they make mistakes in this game. Pushing people out when they make mistakes, especially in this game, is ingrained in many of us and it often takes time to adapt to changes.

After the game, ask how they liked Cooper Says. How do they feel about it compared with Simon Says? Why? How can it help us build a more caring community? Based on this activity, review your community agreements and see if you want to add anything.

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Check agenda

Go over the objectives, the agenda, and your Class Community Agreements.

Puppets: Good listening

One of the things that helps people work well together is listening to each other.

Introduce the class puppets. Say that they are part of the class and will be helping us from time to time. You can name them or involve the children in naming them.

Present a puppet skit in which one puppet is telling the other about her trip to the dentist, and the other puppet doesn't listen well. He yawns, fidgets, interrupts, starts talking about his trip to the dentist instead.

Ask if _____ is doing a good job of listening. Ask how they think _____ (the other puppet) is feeling? Explain that one way of sharing is listening. When we listen, we share our time and attention with the other person. Listening is at the heart of a caring community. How could _____ do a better job of listening? What would he have to do? Elicit ideas such as looking at the person, not interrupting. Replay the skit with good listening. How is _____ feeling now? Make a brief checklist of guidelines for good listening.

Practice Good listening skills

Ask for a volunteer to share something fun they did recently. Have the rest of the class practice good listening for about 30 seconds. Ask students: was it easy or difficult to practice their good listening skills? Ask the student who was speaking, what it was like for them to be listened to? Have students reflect on the similarities and differences between listening in person and remotely. Repeat the activity with two or three volunteers sharing something fun they did recently.

Reflection

What's one thing you'll do differently when it comes to listening as a result of today's lesson? Ask for several volunteers to share their thoughts with the group.

Closing: Pass the Sound*

Let students know that in this activity we will be “passing” sounds from one person to the next. Share a list of student names in the chat, to provide the order in which the game is played and brainstorm some different sounds that students might use, like animal sounds, different tones of voice, high or low, long or short, clapping, snapping or popping sounds, etc.

Begin by making a sound and “pass” it to the first student on the list by saying their name. Ask the student to imitate the sound you are making and then have them change it into another sound. They will pass their sound to the next student on the list by saying their name. This student repeats the new sound passed to them and changes it again. After everyone has had their turn, the sound gets passed back to you.

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Extension Activities

Puppets, when it’s hard to share: Present a puppet skit of a situation where sharing is difficult. For example, one character has been waiting for a long time to work at the computer. When they finally get their turn, another character comes along and wants a turn at the same time. Ask students for other sharing situations they experience at home or elsewhere, to act out with the puppets.

Ask the class to describe what is happening. Ask, how is _____ feeling? How is _____ feeling? What advice would you give the characters about how to handle the problem? Let the one who doesn’t really want to share be feisty and refuse to accept an easy solution that doesn’t take their needs into account. Push the children’s thinking about how to deal with situations like these in a way that’s respectful of both parties.

Puppet role plays: Have students create their own puppets. [There is a template in the handouts that accompany the curriculum. Share with your students and email to families for home activities. Or use a lunch-size paper bag and decorate.] Having made their own puppets, students can practice doing skits at home, with different sharing scenarios. Have them think about the different things they share with their siblings and other family members. When is it hard to share? Try acting out those scenarios with the puppets at home and see if the puppets can find a solution. When students come back to class, ask different students to act out their puppet skits on sharing, good listening and problem solving for the whole class to see.

Lesson 6

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice good listening; • express their opinions and see that differences of opinion are okay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda to share with students • “Guidelines for Good Listening” from Lesson 5

Gathering: Cooper Says or Quiet Listening

If the class can use an upbeat gathering, and students enjoyed Cooper Says from Lesson 4, introduce it again. Consider having a student or more become Cooper to take the lead.

If you’re looking for a more quiet and soothing gathering, explain to students that we’re going to practice listening as fully as we can. Invite students to get comfortable in their seats and close their eyes, if they want. If closing their eyes doesn’t feel good, ask them to lower their gaze instead. Next tell students that you’d like them to focus on their listening. Ask them to pay attention to the different sounds in the space that they’re in. Ask them to really notice these sounds. Depending on student focus, maybe ask them to also stretch their listening to the sounds beyond the space that they’re in, sounds in other rooms perhaps, or sounds outside. Alternatively, you can ask students to focus on the sounds inside of themselves.

After a minute or so of listening, ask students to open their eyes or look back up to the screen.

Ask students what they heard when they focused on their listening in the space, outside of the space and/or inside of themselves. Ask students if they heard any new sounds that they don’t usually hear. Why do they think that is? Elicit and explain that when we really focus on our listening, we might hear more than we usually do, we might hear sounds that we don’t usually hear even though they have been there all along.

Check agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda, review Class Community Agreements.

Think Differently

At first, Mr. Plumbean's neighbors were not very respectful of his wanting to be different. Explain that in our class, we want to respect each other's ideas and opinions. This activity will help us practice doing that by focusing on our own listening skills.

Ask students to create three signs on blank paper: Agree, Disagree and Not Sure. Have them write the words on specific color construction paper or in a specific color crayon or marker, e.g. Green for Agree, Blue for Disagree and Brown for Not Sure. They can decorate their paper using only that color, to help distinguish the words on screen.

Tell the students you'll say a statement. They are to hold up the appropriate sign according to whether they Agree with the statement, Disagree, or are Not Sure. Pick statements on which you think your students will have a range of opinions. Once the students hold up their signs, ask for volunteers from each opinion to say more about why they think that. Encourage some dialogue among children with differing opinions. If children change their minds in the course of the discussion, they can change their sign.

Start with an example prompt like "Broccoli is the most delicious vegetable" and give a few volunteers a chance to share their opinions. You might talk about how some people love broccoli while others really dislike it. There might also be people who aren't sure, because they need more information, like are we talking about raw broccoli as a snack or in a salad, or steamed broccoli with butter and garlic, stir fried broccoli with soy sauce and other flavors, or prepared in other delicious ways still. As students share out additional information like this, other students might end up changing their minds, which you'll give them a chance to do before the next statement.

Here are some suggested statements:

- Children shouldn't be required to attend school.
- Children should be limited to one hour of screen time a day.
- Children should wear uniforms during school hours.
- Children should be allowed to chew gum and eat candy in class.
- Children should be able to wear pajamas in the classroom.
- Children should not be allowed to drink soda
- Children should not be allowed on any social media

If time allows, ask students to think back to Mr. Plumbean and his neighbors. How do you think this activity relates to the story?

Reflection

How does good listening relate to making up your mind or changing your mind about things?
Ask for several volunteers to share their thoughts with the group.

Closing

With their cameras and microphones on, invite students to put their hands up to the screen, then on the count of three, have them throw their hands in the air and shout out a celebratory “Yes!” together for the good work they did today.



Note: Consider doing this activity several times, starting with a loud, celebratory “Yes!” with lots of energy.

Next, have students put their hands up to the screen – this time we’ll do the same thing: a celebratory “Yes!” with lots of energy— but a very quiet “Yes!”

And a third time, make a medium sounding “Yes!”

Lesson 7

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practice progressive muscle relaxation • explore thankfulness • share what they're thankful for • make thankfulness flowers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda to share with students • student journal, writing utensil

Gathering: Squeeze-Relax

To help students relax as you begin today's lesson, ask them to tighten or squeeze the muscles in their feet, hold for three to five seconds, and then relax. Continue squeezing and relaxing their legs, back, stomach, chest, hands, arms, shoulder, neck and face. Finish by asking students to squeeze all their muscles at the same time, hold for three to five seconds, and relax. Ask a few volunteers to describe what this was like for them.

Check Agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda; review Class Community Agreements.

Exploring Thankfulness

Ask students if they know what the word thankful (or gratitude) means.

Play the read aloud of [The Thankful Book](#) (2:53 min), or the song based on that book [The Thankful Song](#) (2:17 min) to discuss what people might be thankful for.

Spend some time talking with students about some of the things you're thankful for to further illustrate thankfulness. Screen share and use the following prompt:

I am thankful for _____

because _____

Next, taking turns, invite students to share one thing, person, experience, etc. they're thankful for and why. Call out each student's name or have students call on another student, themselves, when they're done sharing.



Note: You can also use this activity as an end-of-day class routine, to end class on a high note. Make sure that the gratitude gets distributed among all students, so that no one feels left out.

Thankfulness Flowers

Have students on paper draw a circle and write "I am thankful for" in it. Then draw petals around the center of the flower in which they can write different things they are thankful for, like so:

Invite students to share their images on screen and talk about them if time allows. Consider creating a thankfulness bouquet to share with students next time you meet.



Reflection

Ask students how thinking about what they're thankful for, and making/sharing, thankful flowers makes them feel?

Closing: Touch Blue*

When you call out, "Touch blue!" Ask students to get up and find something near them with the color blue, then ask them to come back to the screen. Continue with other colors. You can also vary the game as follows: "Touch sneaker," "Touch shoulder," and so on.

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Extension Activities

Drawing and Writing: [“In positive psychology research](#), gratitude is strongly and consistently associated with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions, relish good experiences, improve their health, deal with adversity, and build strong relationships.” It’s why cultivating gratitude in young children and helping them build a gratitude practice of their own is so important. Practicing gratitude and feeling thankful is a good first step, expressing it, especially when we’re grateful for other people is another important practice that can help us feel better and strengthen our relationships. Have students think of a person in their lives, who they are grateful for. Draw them a picture and write them a few lines, explaining why they’re thankful for this person. Have students with the help of an adult send the picture to the person in question.

Keep a gratitude journal: Give students time regularly to write down things they are thankful for. You can have them share out what they’re thankful for on a regular basis as the start or end of the day as well.

Remote gratitude jar: Have students share the things they are grateful for on a regular basis. Write them down on slips of paper and put them in a jar. When the class needs a pick me up, you can go into the jar and pick 1, 2 or 3 slips of paper to read out loud/share with your students.

Watch: Watch this Special Covid-19 Thankfulness video [“2nd Grade Gratitude”](#) made by 2nd graders at the California School for the Deaf in April 2020. Having watched the video, have students think about other people in their lives who they are thankful for beyond their family and friends.

Lesson 8

Objectives	Materials needed
Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do a Breathing Activity practice Positive Affirmations (for self) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agenda to share with students

Gathering: Balloon Breathing

Ask students to put their hands on their belly. Then ask them to take a deep breath in through their nose as they make their bellies bigger, like a balloon blowing up. Breathe out through their mouth, pursing their lips, making a swoosh sound, as their bellies get smaller. Repeat five times. Ask some volunteers what that was like for them.



Note: A few deep breaths, at different times during the day will pay off in a calmer, more focused class. And you'll be developing in your students a habit and skill that will serve them well throughout their lives.

Affirmations: Call and Response

Ask students if they know what affirmations are. Do they ever practice affirmations? Elicit and explain that affirmations are “positive things we say about ourselves to ourselves” to make us stronger and feel good about ourselves. Like for instance “I am smart.” Have the students repeat after you “I am smart.”

Next say: “I am strong” and have your students repeat it to themselves: “I am strong”
 Say: “I can do anything” and have your students repeat to themselves: “I can do anything”
 Say: “I’m proud of myself” and have your students repeat to themselves: “I’m proud of myself”
 And finally, say “I love myself” and have your students repeat to themselves “I love myself”

Repeat this call and response affirmation activity 2 or 3 times with your students.

Other affirmations to consider:

- I'm kind,
- I'm happy to be me,
- I'm perfect how I am,
- I work hard,
- I do my best,
- I learn new things every day,
- My mistakes help me learn, etc.



Note: Use this activity regularly with your students as it will help boost their confidence and self esteem. Encourage them to come up with their own affirmations, and invite them to share these affirmations with the rest of the class to repeat back. This is another powerful way to start or end the day with your kids.

“What I Am” Song by Will.i.am

Play the video of Will.i.am singing “[What I Am](#)” with his Muppet friends. Have students watch, listen to and move along with the song. Ask, How does what Will.i.am sings relate to the earlier affirmations? What were some of the positive things (affirmations) Will (with his friends) shared about himself. Chart them, e.g. Will (and his friends) shared that he was:

- thoughtful
- musical
- smart
- brave
- helpful
- special

Ask students either to pick one of these to affirm themselves or share another affirmation that they feel more suits them. Add additional affirmations to the chart.

To finish, play the “What I Am” song again but this time with lyrics, so students can once again move but also sing along: [What I am! Will.I.Am Lyrics](#)

Reflection

Ask students to share how today's affirmations made them feel.

Closing: Round of Applause

Explain that like affirmations, celebrating the good work we did today, can also make us feel good, so let's do that using a "round of applause." Invite the students to start clapping along with you. As you continue to clap, move your hands around in a circle, encouraging students to do the same.

Extension Activities:

Play: [Affirmation Yoga with Yo Re Mi](#) "With a series of yoga power-poses, kids can practice positive affirmations to build confidence and self-esteem. We begin our flow in High Lunge and Warrior 2, strengthening our leg and core muscles. Then we move to Star Pose, a gentle heart opener. Tree Pose and Warrior 3 build our strength and balance, and Fierce Pose (also known as Chair Pose) grounds and focuses us."

You can invite your students

to follow along with the Yo Re Mi yoga instructor, as best as they can, doing the poses and affirming themselves

to watch the video then choose an affirmation of their own, possibly one of the affirmations the yoga instructor shares, and a pose of their own to go along with it. Invite the other children in the class to echo back the affirmation and the pose, after each child has their turn.

Play: [Morning Affirmations for Kids](#). Invite students to listen to this call and response affirmation audio, and speak the affirmations out loud in with the child in the audio. When done, ask your students how the activity made them feel.

Lesson 9

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> do a Breathing Activity practice Positive Affirmations (for others) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agenda to share with students

Gathering: Stretches

Have the children stand up and tell them you're going to lead in them doing "stretches." Make sure the children go to a space where they have some room to move and invite them to move along as much or as little as they are able to. "First we stretch up." Put your arms straight up over your head and reach for the ceiling. "Now we stretch down." Bend over and touch your toes. "Now we stretch right." With your arms outstretched, bend at the waist and stretch to the right. "Now we stretch to the left." With your arms outstretched, bend at the waist and stretch to the left. And so on.

Check Agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda.

Affirming Each Other: Using Put-Ups

Explain that now that we've learned how to use affirmations to feel good about ourselves, we're going to do the same, but this time for other people. We're going to share the love by helping other people feel stronger and good about *themselves* using what we call "put-ups" in our 4Rs Curriculum.

Model what an affirmation (or put-up) is when directed at other people, by being the first person to speak, e.g. "Lulu, you ask really smart questions." "Jabari, you were being really kind when you helped Sam with his project."

Now have the students try. Invite some volunteers to share an affirmation (or put-up) about another student in the class.

If students struggle, consider brainstorming some affirmations first, by talking them through different scenarios. Create an affirmations (put ups) chart together for students to reference:

- you did it!
- you're helpful
- you make a difference
- you're kind
- you're a good friend
- I like how you solved that problem

Now try again.

Keep coming back to the chart, as you hear students use put ups with each other throughout the day. Recognize them as put ups and add them to the chart. Encourage students to listen for put ups, as well, and practice them throughout the school day.

Ask, How do you think using put ups will help make the class a more welcoming place to be?



Note: You can combine put-ups and thank-yous as an end-of-day class routine, to end class on a high note. Again, make sure that the gratitude and put-ups get distributed among all students, so that no one feels left out.

Reflection

Ask students to share how today's affirmations (or put-ups) made them feel.

Closing

With their cameras and microphones on, invite students to put their hands up to the screen, then on the count of three, have them throw their hands in the air and shout out a celebratory "Yes!" together for the good work they did today.



Note: Consider doing this activity several times, starting with a loud, celebratory “Yes!” with lots of energy.

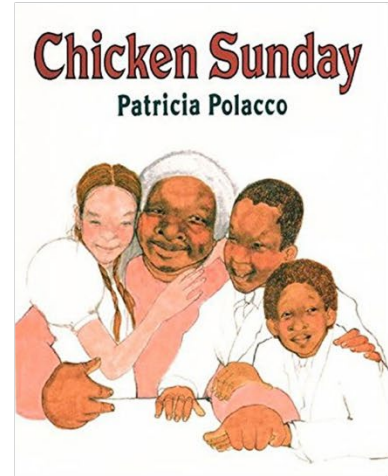
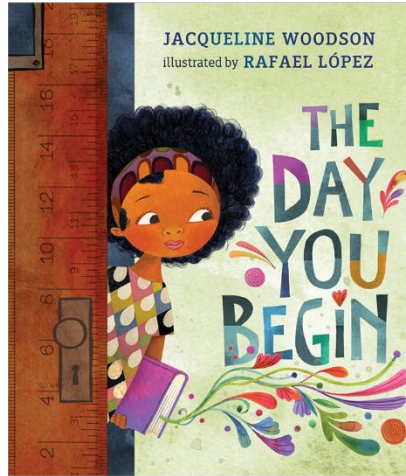
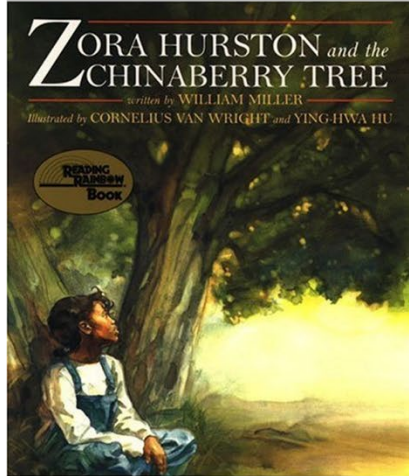
Next, have students put their hands up to the screen – this time we’ll do the same thing: a celebratory “Yes!” with lots of energy— but a very quiet “Yes!”

And a third time, make a medium sounding “Yes!”

Extension Activity

Drawing and Writing: Think of a time you received a put up and how that made you feel or a time that you gave a put up and how that made you feel. Draw a picture of you and the other person and write a sentence or a few words to explain the picture.

Suggested Books for further exploration:



- *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson

The following is a list of books from the 2000 edition of The 4Rs. Many are still in print and might be in your school library.

- *Chicken Sunday* by Patricia Polacco
- *The Day of Ahmed's Secret* by Florence Parry Heide
- *The Five Hundred Hats of Bartholemew Cubbins* by Dr. Seuss
- *Goose* by Molly Bag
- *Old Henry* by Joan Blos
- *Stellaluna* by Jenell Cannon
- *The Ugly Duckling* by Hans Christian Anderson
- *Zora Hurston and the Chinaberry Tree* by William Miller, illustrated by Cornelius Van Wright and Ying-Hwa Hu

Unit 2:

Understanding & Dealing with Feelings

Book selection: *We Are Best Friends* by Aliki

Activities

1. Chart of Feelings Words
2. Drawing and Writing
3. Acting out feelings
4. Puppet Skit: Annoying Behavior



Literacy & SEL Ideas and Skills in this Unit:

Literacy	
Ideas	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparisons • Hyperbole • Subplot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary in context • Empathizing
Social and Emotional Learning	
Ideas	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings are a part of life • We all have feelings • We can choose what we do when feelings arise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naming feelings • Reading feelings • Reflecting feelings • Expressing feelings in constructive ways

We Are Best Friends, by Alik. Mulberry Books, an imprint of William Morrow, 1982.

Summary

Peter comes over to tell Robert that he is moving out of town. Robert is very upset. “You can’t move away. We are best friends,” he protests. But Peter moves away, and Robert, surrounded by people who are still happy and doing things with their friends, feels lonely and bored. Even at his birthday party he cannot cheer up. He misses sharing with Peter. He misses fighting with him. In fact, he is so angry at him for moving away that he thinks he would punch him if he were here. Then a new boy shows up at school and tries to start a conversation. Robert is silent, thinking that he doesn’t “like people with silly names like Will or who have glasses or freckles.” Will covers his nervousness and insecurity by announcing that he has lots of friends at his old school, which “was fun. Not boring like this place.” Then a letter comes from Peter, who has moved through the separation process enough to have a new friend and to be able to enjoy school and playing again. Robert draws a letter to Peter reminding him of what they could be doing together. But we see the first hints that he is ready to let go of his grief when he tells Peter that there is a new boy in school. Later, he sees Will by the fence. They chat and discover that Will likes frogs and Robert knows where to find some. They go to the pond in Robert’s yard and play with the frogs. “‘I haven’t had so much fun since I moved here,’ said Will. ‘Neither have I,’ said Robert.” Robert writes to Peter of his new friend and his anticipation of a reunion with Peter in the summer. Then he rides over to Will’s house to play.

Comment

The simple language and drawings convey the strong feelings that run through this book. The dialogue covers a wide range of under-the-surface emotion. We can ask what would happen if Robert were to continue in his funk. Would he get into fights with people? Would anyone ever want to be his friend? How can we stay in touch with people whom we no longer see on a daily basis? How can we make new friends without feeling disloyal to our old friends? How much do our feelings influence all aspects of our lives?

Book Talk

Read-aloud: Pull up the video link [We Are Best Friends](#); or if you prefer and have a hard copy, use it!

Previewing the book

Consider one of the two following options, a. if you have the book you can do your own read aloud and book talk following the directions below, and b. if you don't have the book, pull up on your screen the video of the read aloud for students to watch.

Option a: Show the cover of the book, front and back. Ask the students to write down any questions they have about it. Ask them to share the questions with the whole class. What do they think the book will be about? Have they read other books by this same author? Show the title page. What are the boys doing? Show the dedication page and read the dedication. What are the boys doing on each page?

Reading and responding to the book

Invite students to get ready for the read aloud. Ask them, how and where can they sit so that they can be focused. How can you help them stay focused?

Read the book slowly, giving students times to look at the pictures. Ask the students what they think the characters are feeling as you move through the dialogue. Occasionally ask what they think will happen next.

Option b: Play the video of the read aloud of [We Are Best Friends](#) read by Marissa Halat. Instruct students to pay special attention to what happens between the friends over the course of the book. How are they feeling? How does that change?

After you have finished reading or showing the story, ask the students to write their first thoughts and questions about the book. Allow some time for a free discussion and attempts to answer questions.

What other books do we know by this author?

How many times a day do you say good-bye? Write down all the people you say good-bye to in one day. Write the names of all the people you say hello to in a day. Write down names of new people you have met this month or a description of a new person you have met this month.

Deepening students' understanding of the book

Ask the students to re-tell the book. What do they think the book is about? Why do they think the author wrote the book? They may talk about the activities or the loss of a friend. In this unit, we want to focus on the feelings of love, loss, and friendship and the processes of growth and renewal.

Explain that in the second reading you want them to think about how the dialogue helps you know what the characters are thinking. For instance, Robert berates Peter for moving away. How does his anger show us how much he cares? When Will says that his frog misses him a lot (p. 18), do we think that Will misses the frog as much? Will tells Robert that if he (Will) had a frog in his garden, he'd share it and Robert replies that he is in fact sharing it. Why can't Will accept this gesture of friendship at face value? How do the pictures help you know what the characters are thinking? Notice what the friends have done together and what the new friends do together.

Connecting the book to students' lives

Discussion: Ask the students to think about partings they have had in their lives. These partings do not always have to be sad. They could have said good-bye because they were taking a trip somewhere. These good-byes can be to people, places, or things. Ask some volunteers to talk about a parting. How did they feel?

Writing: Write a letter to a real or imaginary friend describing something you learned to do this week. (This may involve describing the parts of a letter and setting up a model for students to follow.)

Write a description of one of your friends: put in details, like hair color and style, skin color, eye shape and color, clothing style, etc. Write a dialogue about something you like to do together.

Write a collaborative metaphor poem with the class to model the process, then ask students to write individual poems about feelings. For example, let's write a poem about sadness (anger, happiness, etc.). What other things do you feel like when you're sad? What do you move like? What do you look like? Help students make their metaphors more specific by adding a "that" clause, such as, "When I'm sad I feel like soda that's lost its fizz."

Role-play

Brainstorm with students a few different scenarios of things that happened in the book between Peter and Robert and later between Robert and Will. Ask for two volunteers who want to act out a scene from the book. Have students choose a scene. After the pairs have acted out their scene, ask for volunteers to present to the class the scene the actors picked. After each presentation, lead the class in a round of applause. Ask the actors how they felt playing their roles.

Lessons to Help Understand, Name and Deal with Feelings

Lesson 1

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recall words from the story that name feelings; share other “feelings words” they know and explain what they mean; come up with synonyms for “feelings words” draw pictures of something they like to do with a friend and write about their drawings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agenda to share with students poster board or chart paper for making the Chart of Feelings Words drawing paper and markers or crayons

Gathering: What Makes Me Happy

Ask students to think about the things that make them happy. Give some examples of your own, like hugs, petting a dog or cat, playing with friends, going into the yard, swimming, sleeping, taking a shower, etc. Ask students to take turns sharing one thing that makes them happy.

Ask students at the end: what was it like to listen to people share what made them happy?

Check agenda

Go over the objectives and agenda; review Class Community Agreements from Unit 1.

Chart of feelings words

Make a chart for “feelings words.” Begin the chart by asking the children to recall feelings experienced by the characters in the story, and as a child contributes a word, write it on the chart.

If they leave any out, read the page of the story in which the feeling is named or expressed. In this way, add the rest of the feelings words from the story to the chart.

Ask the children to share other feelings words they know and add them to the chart. Consider asking them for synonyms of certain feeling words as well, recognizing that we can have different gradations of feelings, like in our gathering for example we used happy. What are other words that describe when we’re feeling a little happy (glad, pleased or cheerful perhaps) and as we get happier, and happier the happy feeling might get stronger. We might feel delighted, thrilled, elated, overjoyed, etc.



Note: Encourage the children to come up with different gradations of emotions and encourage them to start using them in The 4Rs lessons and throughout the school day. It is important students learn to name their feelings as a first step to being able to channel their emotions

Save the document for use throughout the year and add to it as new feelings words are encountered in reading, in speech or in teachable moments.

Drawing and Writing

Ask each child to draw a picture of something they like to do with a friend. Once their drawings are done, ask them to write about their drawings using different feelings words. Ask students to show their pictures with the rest of the class. Then ask each student to share out one feeling word that they used in their writing.

Reflect

What’s a new word you learned today that has to do with feelings?

Closing: Rainbow Breathing

Invite students to sit or stand in a place where they can stretch their arms out to their sides without bumping into anything.

Say that in a little bit we're going to put our arms out to our sides, as far as they can reach. On the in-breath we'll bring them slowly up above our heads, drawing a rainbow in the air until our hands touch. On the out-breath, we'll bring our arms back down to our sides. Model for students what the movement looks like as you talk them through it.

Say that you'll do five rainbow breaths, breathing in through our noses, pausing at the top of the rainbow, and breathing out through our mouths, as we bring our arms back down, pausing again at the bottom (as Grace Cecilio shows us in the video [Calm Corner: Rainbow Breath](#)).

Depending on your experience and comfort level with mindful breathing techniques, you can also play the video to have Grace Cecilio talk your students through the activity.

Check in with students. How are they feeling right now? They can use words or facial expressions to show you how they're feeling.



Note: A few deep breaths, at different times during the day will pay off in a calmer, more focused class. And you'll be developing in your students a habit and skill that will serve them well throughout their lives.

Lesson 2

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> act out feelings non-verbally; practice “reading” feelings other students are acting out; come up with more synonyms for “feeling words” generate ideas for helping one of the puppets to form a new friendship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agenda to share with students the puppets

Gathering: Name Game

Make sure all students have their cameras and microphones on. Play the Name Game from Unit 1 again. You can opt to play it in the same way, by throwing an imaginary item to each student and have them throw it back to you, as you, and then the class, greets each student by name. Pick a different imaginary object, or have the students decide on an imaginary object they’d like to use. Have them describe it in detail before starting the game.

Consider a variation in which you share a name order for students to follow as they toss the imaginary object from one student to the next, using names and greeting each student. And if students are ready, consider another variation of having them choose who they want to throw the object to themselves, by calling a classmate’s name, tossing the imaginary object, then having the rest of the class welcome that person by name. Keep track of who’s gone, making sure everyone gets a turn.

Check agenda

Go over the objectives, the agenda, and class community agreements.

Acting out feelings

Think of a neutral sentence like “The sky is cloudy” or “The building is tall.” The children are to choose a feeling from the feelings chart and present that sentence in such a way that it expresses the feeling. The class has to guess the feeling. Give various children turns as long

as interest remains high. Discuss: It's not only what a person says but how they say it that tells us what they are feeling.

Puppets

Reintroduce the puppets, from Unit 1, explaining that they'll be joining us today to help us explore different situations between friends.

In the story, Robert's friend Peter moved away, leaving Robert alone. Will was also alone, having just moved to a new neighborhood and a new school. Both of them faced the challenge of how to make new friends. If you want make a new friend, how can you go about it? Maybe the puppets can help us.

Present a brief puppet skit in which one character is thinking they'd like to ask the other character to be their friend but is scared to and not sure how to go about it.

As the character hesitates, freeze the action and ask the class how they think the puppet character is feeling? If they say the character is afraid, ask why they think the character is afraid? What are they afraid of? Have the students ever felt afraid of reaching out to someone they hoped would be their friend?

Ask the class to coach the character. What might the character say or do to open up a friendship with the other puppet? Let the character think out loud about various suggestions, finally settling on one. The other puppet character should react in a positive but real way. If time allows, act out a few different student suggestions for students to see.

Discuss: What do you think of the suggestions the class gave? Could you see yourself using them to make a new friend? Each of us can have only one best friend, but in a caring classroom community, we can all be friends with each other—and that means working together and including others in our games and activities.

Reflect

What's one thing you liked about today's lesson? Ask for a couple of volunteers to say their thoughts.

Closing: Favorite Game

What's a favorite game you like to play with a friend? Give several volunteers a chance to share with the group.

Lesson 3

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sing a song about different feelings • talk about their different feelings • understand that all feelings are alright • draw different feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda to share with students • paper, markers or crayons • The Mood Song

Gathering: Rainbow or Pretzel Breathing

If students enjoyed the rainbow breathing from a few lessons back, consider reintroducing it. If they want to try a different kind of breathing you can introduce pretzel breathing instead:

Invite students to cross their arms across their chests one over the other, with their hands resting on their shoulders, like a pretzel. Explain that we're going to take five pretzel breaths in through our nose, out through our mouth. Repeat five times (to start with).

And if you think your students can do the more complex version of pretzel breathing, consider showing the following video of Mrs. Morris talking students through the different steps of [Pretzel Breathing](#) and/or the video of third grader Bianca talking about and showing us her version of [Pretzel Breathing](#).

Ask students after their rainbow or pretzel breaths how they're feeling in this moment.



Note: Both kinds of pretzel breathing are explained and shown in this short 1:44 min video: [Pretzel Breathing - Conscious Discipline](#). Pretzel breathing, and any of the mindful activities in this curriculum can be used at any time throughout the school day (as Bianca explains in the video above) to center young children. You can also use them as starting point for a check in, to talk about how students are feeling in this moment.

Check agenda

Go over the objectives, the agenda, and class community agreements.

The Feelings Song

We have been talking a lot about feelings. Mention some of the feelings you've been talking about with your students recently (maybe even during the check in, just now). Explain that next we'll be watching [The Mood Song](#). Invite students to listen, sway, hum, tap along and raise their hands when prompted.

At the end of the song, pull up the feelings chart and ask students if there were any new feelings words in the song that we should add to the list.

Ask students what they liked about the song. Emphasize the message of the song, that we have many different feelings, and whatever we feel is alright.

Drawing Feelings

Ask students to take a sheet of paper and divide it into four parts, either by folding it both ways or by drawing a big cross, dividing the paper into four segments. Explain that today we'll be drawing feelings words. Ask students what are some feelings that you have in a day? To help students think of different feelings ask students to think about how they might feel when:

- You are getting up in the morning and getting ready for school. You brush your teeth, wash your face and eat breakfast. How do you feel?
- The teacher and the other students welcome you with excitement as you show up for class. How do you feel?
- You are learning a new song to sing with the rest of the class. How do you feel?
- You draw a picture about what you did this weekend and share it with the other students. How do you feel?
- The internet went out because of a storm last night so you can't sign up for class today. How do you feel?
- You have finished your day at school. You just logged off. How do you feel?

Pick four scenarios to share. After each scenario ask students to create a feelings face by drawing a circle head and adding eyes, nose, eyebrows and a mouth to show the emotion.

Share the feelings list you've been working on to help students with their drawings.

After a few minutes, have students show their drawings on screen and ask a few volunteers to say the feeling they drew, and explain why. Talk about how it's normal for our feelings change throughout the day. Refer to the song we heard (sang) today. Emphasize the message of the song, that we have many different feelings in a day, and how all those feelings are all alright.

Reflect

What's one thing you liked about today's lesson? Ask for a couple of volunteers to say their thoughts (and maybe even their feelings).

Closing: The Mood Song, Encore

Pull The Mood Song refrain text on screen for students to sing as today's closing:

Hey, hey what's your mood today

I know sometimes it's hard to say

Hey, hey what's your mood today

Whatever you feel is alright

Then on the count of three have everyone show how they're feeling on their face and in their body.

Lesson 4

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify strong feelings • talk about a time they experienced a particular strong feeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agenda to share with students • The Mood Song

Gathering: Fist to Five

Ask students to check in with themselves. How are they feeling right now? Explain that you'd like them to show you how they're feeling, using their fist (0) to five (5 fingers), with 0 being the worst day ever, and 5 being the best day ever. Give an example of what a 0 day might be like for you and what a 5 day might be like. Then ask students on the count of three to give a fist to five on screen. Look around.

Without calling attention to the kind of day a particular student is having, ask for general observations. How does the group as a whole seem to be feeling? Is anything happening in class that might explain that? Maybe the fact that we're all back to remote, or that the holidays are coming up or we just completed a difficult math problem impacts how we feel. If not everyone is feeling the same way about their day, acknowledge that as well. It's important to acknowledge young people's feelings, whatever they may be. It allows them to feel seen.

Check agenda

Go over the objectives and agenda; review Class Community Agreements from Unit 1.

Strong Feelings

Ask students to think back to the book and the different feelings that Robert, Peter and Will felt at different points throughout the story.

Think back to when Peter first came to tell Robert that he was moving away. Thinking back to our gathering, where do students think Robert would have been using the fist (0) to five (5 fingers) scale. What feelings might he have had?

And what about Peter? Again, thinking back to our gathering, where do students think Peter would have been on the scale from fist to five. What feeling might he have had?

- Ask some volunteers to talk about a time when they had a day that was 0, 1 (or maybe 2) fingers. What feelings did they have?

When Will showed up, where do the children think Robert was on a scale from fist to five? What was he feeling? What about Will where was he on the scale? And what might he have been feeling?

- Ask some other volunteers to talk about a time when they had a day that was 1, 2 (or maybe 3) fingers. What feelings did they have?

Finally ask the children where they think Robert might have been on the scale when he shared the frogs in his garden with Will. What was he feeling? Where do they think Will was on the scale? What was he feeling?

- Ask some other volunteers to talk about a time when they had a day that was 4 or 5 fingers. What feelings did they have?

Writing a Letter to a Friend

Invite students to write a letter to a friend or someone they feel close to about a time in their life when they were at 4 or 5 fingers. Describe what happened and if the good times were because of the person you're writing, you can thank them as well. If there is time left, ask students to illustrate their letter.



Note: At some point during the week, possibly in ELA, or next time you convene a 4Rs lesson, come back to this activity. Have students put their finishing touches on their letters and share out what happened, and what they were grateful for. Consider doing this at a time during the week when you and your students can use some positivity. See how the activity impacts your students; if their moods shift from a few fingers to more fingers as a result.

Closing: The Mood Song, Encore

As a reminder, pull The Mood Song refrain text on screen for students to sing as today's closing, or play [The Mood Song](#) again and have students sing along with the refrain:

Hey, hey what's your mood today

I know sometimes it's hard to say

Hey, hey what's your mood today

Whatever you feel is alright

Then on the count of three have everyone show how they're feeling using a fist to five. Did the mood of the class change from the start of the lesson to now?

Lesson 5

Objectives	Materials needed
<p>Students will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recall a recent time when they experienced a strong feeling identify what went on in their mind and body when they felt the strong feeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> agenda to share with students chart of feelings words

Gathering: Squeeze-Relax

Invite students to get comfortable in their seats. Sit up straight, both feet on the ground. Ask them to tighten or squeeze the muscles in their feet, hold for three to five seconds, and then relax. Continue squeezing and relaxing their legs, back, stomach, chest, hands, arms, shoulder, neck and face. Finish by asking students to squeeze all their muscles at the same time, hold for three to five seconds, and relax. Invite students to check in with their bodies. How do they feel right now?

Check agenda

Go over the objectives and the agenda.

Strong Feelings in the Body

Pull up an image of a body outline on the screen. Ask students when they're feeling a strong worried, upset, anxious, nervous, fear or angry feeling, where are they feeling it in their bodies. How? Mark up the body parts that the students mention. Then talk about what happens to those body parts.

Starting with nervous, worried or anxious, e.g., students might say they feel butterflies or a tightness in their stomach. They might feel a little jumpy or jittery in their legs, with a dry mouth or throat. Their hearts may start to beat a little faster and they might feel a tension in their face, around the eyes perhaps.

For fear, students might say their hearts beat more strongly, a pounding heart perhaps, some of us hear it in our ears. Some students might experience what is called cold sweat and our bodies might feel tense in different places. We might end up holding our breath. For anger students might feel their face get warm, their heart beat faster, their stomach and hands tense up, and like with fear there might be a pounding heart or rushing, that some hear in their ears.

Flipping Our Lid

Our bodies are designed to keep us safe and healthy and the responses we just discussed can be seen as warning signs. They get the body ready to protect and defend itself, which is a good thing when we are in danger. But sometimes the body doesn't know the difference between a thing that happens that feels uncomfortable or something that happens that requires us to protect and defend ourselves.

Sometimes we have strong feelings, which trigger the so-called “stress response” and we end up flipping our lid. You can show young people what happens when our strong feelings trigger the stress response using [Dan Siegel’s handy model of the brain](#). Talk students through the model of the brain, illustrating it with your own hand by folding your thumb into the palm of your hand and wrapping your fingers over the top of it. You can ask students to follow your lead doing the same with their hands. Also show students what happens when we “flip our lid” by springing your fist open, having your four fingers flip up, away from the palm of your hand.

It helps to talk with young children about the brain having an upstairs brain and a downstairs brain. When our lid is on (see the video) we are able to access our upstairs brain. This part of the brain is sometimes referred to as the wise leader. It's the thinking part of the brain. It's where we make good decisions, do our best problem solving. It's where we can be creative and learn new things. But when something is wrong or we feel unsafe, the security guard takes over from the wise leader. When things get really stressful, the security guard makes us flip our lid. We go into protection mode, into the downstairs brain, where our “fight or flight mode” exists to keep us safe.

Now the security guard is important, for example, when our hand gets too close to, or even touches, a hot stove. There's not much thinking from the wise leader involved when we pull back our hand from the stove really quickly. Or, for example, when we step into a busy street without looking and a car is speeding towards us. The security guard makes us jump back on the curb without much thinking from the wise leader to keep us safe. The problem is that the security guard sometimes blows things out of proportion. It makes things bigger than they really are.

Drawing Strong Feelings

Ask the students to think about a time in their lives recently when they flipped their lid or someone in their lives flipped their lid. What happened? Where did it happen? Who was involved? Ask students to draw what happened, then have students share out their artwork.

Based on the students' artwork you can summarize that there are different reasons why we might flip our lids. Explain that everyone flips their lids, adults too, especially when there's a lot going on in our lives, when we have a lot of problems, and we experience a lot of stress.

If time allows, ask students, when they flipped their lids, What happened next? Ask for a show of hands if anyone regretted what they did, when they flipped their lid? Explain that that is because the security guard took over from the wise leader. When the wise leader is back we can think about what happened and what we could have done in the situation instead, also what we might do, next time something like this happens.

Closing

Explain that when the security guard takes over and we flip our lids we don't do our best thinking and might do things we'll regret later on. There are different things we can do, when we feel that we're about to flip our lid, to keep it down (or even when we've flipped our lid, to bring it back down). We can take some deep breaths or do the tense and relax activity from earlier in the lesson. Ask students if they have a preference as to which to use for the closing today. You may even have a student who is ready to lead you in balloon, rainbow or pretzel breathing.

End the lesson by saying that when our lid is on, our wise leader can help us think about how we might respond to and address the things that made us nervous, fearful or angry in the first place. It can help us see different possibilities. What, if anything, do we want to say? How do we want to act?

Best Friends Together Again, by Alik.

Greenwillow, 1995.

OPTIONAL Read-Aloud:

Pull up the video link for [Best Friends Together Again](#); or if you prefer and have a hard copy, use it!

Summary

More than a decade in real time has gone by since the first book, but in the sequel to *We Are Best Friends* it is about a year since Peter moved away and Robert, at first bereft, slowly formed a friendship with a new boy, Will. Now Peter is returning with his family for a two-week visit and Robert is elated. However, he is also worried. Will Peter still like him? Will they be able to play together as they used to? The doorbell rings and it is Peter. For the first time, the author lets us in on the interior thoughts of the characters. “Something is different, thought Robert. I forgot he had curly hair. . . . Something is different, thought Peter. That’s not the nose I remember.” But as they begin to play with the dog, “they forgot about what they had not remembered.”

Peter has brought a gift for Robert—a homemade paper airplane that works very well. His new friend Alex has taught him how to make them. Robert and Peter reminisce about their toys and favorite lunch, which they eat. As they look at the frogs in the garden, Robert says that his new friend Will wants to meet Peter. Now Peter is apprehensive. Has Will supplanted him in Robert’s mind? Robert says, “Will is just like a best friend . . . But he’s not an oldest best friend, like us.” Will arrives and admires the plane. They decide to go to the park to fly it. On the way there, they run into other old friends and there is an impromptu reunion in the park. They decide to meet at Will’s house on the next day and have a paper-folding party so that they can all fly paper airplanes. Every day that Peter is in town they get together to play. At the end of the visit, Peter urges Robert to visit him. “‘A visit is fun to look forward to,’ said Peter. ‘Just like friends.’” The last page shows Robert holding a thank-you note from Peter that includes written instructions on how to make a paper plane.

COMMENT

Although this book may not have the emotional intensity of the first, it offers a reassuring picture of lives in which change has happened but people have adapted and maintained ties with each other. Each of their lives is enriched by their new relationships. Peter brings the knowledge of

how to make a good paper airplane that he has gained from Alex. Will brings enthusiasm and a new site for play and gathering to the group.

Previewing the book

Show the cover and ask what the students think will happen in this book. Show the title page. What do they think is happening? Show the next two pages and read the dedication. Has their idea of what will happen in the book changed?

Reading and responding to the book

Invite students to get ready for the read aloud. Ask them, how and where can they sit so that they can be focused. How can you help them stay focused?

Read the book slowly, giving the students time to look at the pictures and guess what will happen next. You might want to call attention to the interior monologue (p. 5).

If the class is interested, you can refer back to scenes in *We Are Best Friends* to see what the boys are remembering (pp. 6, 14 in book two). Point out the thank-you note that Peter sent Robert.

Deepening the students' understanding of the book

Explain that this book is a sequel to the previous one. If a first book is popular, authors often write a sequel or even a series. (With Star Wars, we are now becoming familiar with prequels.)

Ask the students what interests them in the book. What do they think it is about? What do they think of it compared to the first book? Get as many ideas as you can. We are interested in exploring the themes of friendship, faithfulness, and the ability to be inclusive.

Ask students for examples of how the boys included everyone in their play and didn't hurt anyone's feelings. Have any of the students been in similar situations of making new friends and then introducing them to old friends?

Connecting the book to students' lives

Discussion: Have you ever gone back to somewhere a year after leaving it? How about last year's classroom? What was it like? Ask some volunteers to share out what they remember and how it was different and how it was the same.

When you remember somebody or somewhere, what feelings are you most likely to remember? If you have a good relationship with the person, do you remember the angry or hurt feelings?

What are some of the ways that Robert and Peter get over their shyness with each other? (Playing with the dog, giving a present, especially one that both can play with, inviting new people into the mix, being in a group.)

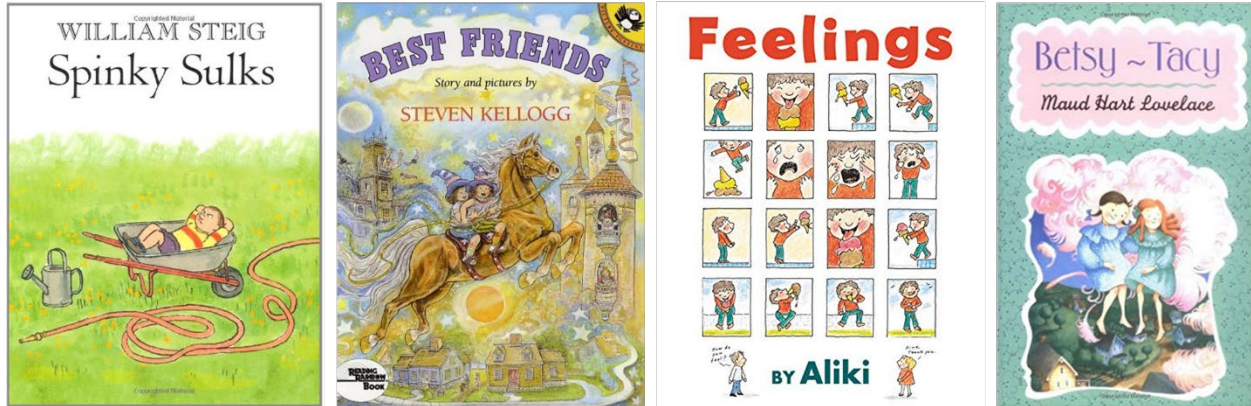
Writing: Show the class how to write a thank-you note. Talk about when it is appropriate to send a note. Ask students to write a thank-you note to someone in their lives. They can give the note to the person or put it on a bulletin board display.

Ask the students to write about going back to a place after they have been away from it awhile. It can be the home of a relative, a classroom, a town, a park, etc.

Ask the students to write a poem to a place or person or thing they wish they could see again. What do they remember? How have they felt during the separation? What message do they have for the place, person, or thing?

Ask students to write a good-bye poem to someone they miss.

Suggested Books for further exploration:



The following is a list of books from the 2000 edition of The 4Rs. Many are still in print and might be in your school library.

- *Best Friends* by Steven Kellogg
- *Best Friends for Frances* by Russell Hoban, Lillian Hoban
- *Betsy Tacy* by Maud Hart Lovelace
- *Feelings* by Alik
- *Frog and Toad are Friends* by Arnold Lobel
- *Matthew and Tilly* by Rebecca C. Jones, illustrated by Beth Peck
- *Spinky Sulks* by William Steig
- *Steven's Baseball Mitt, A Book about Being Adopted* by Kathy Stinson, art by Robin Baird Lewis