



CHARACTER BUILDING

BOOKS+ ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

Reading a book to your child is a fun way to spend time together. But books also can be great teaching tools for character building. Stories can lead to good conversations about right and wrong and how we want our kids to behave. The books in this list, along with their corresponding discussion questions, provide an easy way for you to get started talking about character and the lessons found in each story.

PK - 1ST GRADE

2ND - 3RD GRADE

4TH - 5TH GRADE



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PK - 1ST GRADE

Giraffes Can't Dance / DILIGENCE

1. When other jungle animals call Gerald names and tease him, saying he can't dance, how does he feel? What does Gerald do?
2. How does the cricket encourage Gerald to keep trying? What advice does he give Gerald?
3. What kind of dancer is Gerald at the beginning of the story? What kind of dancer is he at the end of the story? Diligence means careful and persistent effort. How does Gerald exhibit diligence in this story?

Stellaluna / RESPECT

1. How does Stellaluna show respect for Mama Bird with "the rules of this house?"
2. How do the baby birds show respect for Stellaluna and her bat ways?
3. At the end of the story, Stellaluna and the baby birds talk about their differences. What do the friends conclude about their differences? How does this show respect?

Number One Sam / SPORTSMANSHIP

1. How does Sam show good sportsmanship at the beginning of the story to his friend Maggie?
2. Do you think Sam was a good sport after losing the first race? Why or why not?
3. Sam finished the second race in last place. But his friends cheered for him. Why? Why did Sam's friends think he was "number one" even though he lost? Do you think Sam felt OK finishing last? Why or why not?



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2ND - 3RD GRADE

Felipe and Claudette / EMPATHY

1. On adoption day, all the pets get adopted except Felipe and Claudette. How would you feel if you were Felipe or Claudette and weren't picked?
2. Felipe and Claudette "had been at the shelter for ages." How do you think Felipe feels when he sees all the other pets quickly get adopted? How do you think Claudette feels being the only dog not picked?
3. Toward the end of the story, Claudette finally gets adopted, but the man returns her because "she doesn't play or chew or run in circles. She doesn't even bark. All she does is mope." Why do you think Claudette only mopes? Do you think she shouldn't have moped? Why or why not?

Do Unto Otters / MANNERS

1. How would you like otters to treat you? Does "otters" sound like another word that we could use? (others)
2. Can you give me an example of when to say "excuse me?"
3. Mr. Rabbit says, "I'd like otters to be considerate." What are some ways otters are considerate in the book? What are some other ways otters have good manners?

Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day / SELF-CONTROL

1. Alexander's day starts off badly when his brothers find toys in the cereal boxes, but he doesn't. How does Alexander exhibit self-control in this situation even though he's upset?
2. How does Alexander NOT exhibit self-control when Paul says he has new best friends? What does Alexander do? What could he have done better in this situation to show self-control?
3. Alexander's brother Nick calls him a crybaby at one point in the story. How does Alexander respond? Do you think he shows good self-control? Why or why not?



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4TH - 5TH GRADE

Because of Winn-Dixie / FORGIVENESS AND LEADERSHIP

1. In Chapter 11, Winn-Dixie is afraid. How does the preacher show forgiveness to Winn-Dixie? How does Opal feel about her father afterward?
2. In Chapter 23, Gloria Dump says, "You can only love what you got while you got it." How does she exhibit leadership in guiding Opal to an understanding of certain hardships in the girl's life? How has Opal also, in turn, led Gloria and others in the town?
3. Opal stands outside at the end of the novel, staring up at the sky. What role does forgiveness play in how Opal feels about her mother at this point?

Molly's Story / GENTLENESS

1. How does Molly try to protect CJ in this story? Describe Molly in three words.
2. After reading this book, what do you think is the most important purpose for a dog? Why?
3. Gentleness means being kind, tender, and light in touch. Which character is the gentlest in this book and why? Who is the least gentle and why?

The Homework Machine / INTEGRITY

1. If Belch existed at your school, do you think you'd want it to do your homework? Why or why not?
2. Members of the D Squad start failing pop tests at school. Do you think they deserve to fail? Why or why not?
3. Having integrity means being honest and having strong moral principles. Do you think the kids in the D Squad have integrity? Do you think integrity is something you can have if you've been dishonest in the past? If so, how?