

# CHAPTERS, CHARACTERS AND CREATION

DESIGNED FOR GRADE LEVELS - 3 TO 5





## CURRICULUM WRITTEN BY:

### CAITLIN ALDRIDGE

#### **Beacons Program Manager YWCA of Minneapolis**

Caitlin holds a BA in Human Services and Women Studies, University of MN-Morris. In 2002 Caitlin joined the YWCA as a Youth Counselor, facilitating girls-specific leadership development programming. Caitlin currently serves as program manager of the YWCA's Beacon Centers. Caitlin is a trained YPQI facilitator, has participated in the Afterschool Matters Practitioner Fellowship and is constantly looking for modes of continued education within the field of Youth Development.

Caitlin was diagnosed with dyslexia at a young age, and she always nervous to read in front of groups of her peers. When Caitlin became a youth worker she could easily notice youth who also struggled with reading and identify with their anxieties. Caitlin wanted to develop a low stakes way for youth to practice their reading in an environment where they could learn to appreciate reading and connecting with stories.

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in collaboration with St. Paul Sprockets Network

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# COURSE NAME: CHAPTERS, CHARACTERS AND CREATION

## COURSE DESCRIPTION & OVERVIEW:

*Chapters, Characters and Creation* is a course designed to engage youth in grades 3-5th in the story writing processes. Readers of all levels will see the excitement of meeting a new friend and getting a glimpse into their world. The whole group will read the same chapter book, using a mixture of small groups, larger groups, individuals and pairs.

After the first session/chapter the youth will create a group reflection poster of the main character(s).

Every session will begin with a check in/ice breaker, then youth will review the poster and remind each other what has already happened in the book. Each session will end with the youth reflecting on what was read that day, adding new ideas and discoveries to their group reflection poster.

Finally all youth will have the opportunity to develop their own character and decide how to introduce their creation to the community!

Main concepts include: reading comprehension and retention, discussion, identifying with characters, building community around a common theme/story, writing, creating characters and sharing their stories.

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAM RESOURCES:

- Possible books choices: *Wonder* By R.J Palacia, *When I Reach You* by Rebecca Stead and *Sahara Special* by Esme Raji Codell
- Common Sense Media: Get age appropriate reviews of books by expert editors. [www.commonensemedia.org/book-reviews](http://www.commonensemedia.org/book-reviews)
- Smile Kids: Discover an outstanding selection of book review websites that will enable students to explore books and read reviews written by varied individuals. [www.slimekids.com/book-reviews](http://www.slimekids.com/book-reviews)

## MN STATE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:

This curriculum addresses multiple 3-5th grade ELA standards. The goal of the program is to develop a love of learning, excitement in connecting with characters, recounting the stories and reflecting.

The standards that most closely align with this curriculum are:

- Key Ideas and Details
- Craft and Structure
- Production and Distribution of Writing
- Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

# PROGRAM QUALITY – YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY ASSESSMENT (YPQA)

St. Paul Public Schools Community Education identifies quality programming as: safe, supportive, interactive and engaging. Simple, specific examples of program-design related goals are below.

## Safe Environment (Physical and Psychological)

- Be on time
- Choose healthy foods
- Choose appropriate activities for your space
- Choose age-appropriate & inclusive resources (music, images, etc.)
- Maintain school-day norms (no running, respectful of space)
- Manage classroom behavior for the safety of all
- Follow safety procedures and be prepared for emergencies

## Supportive Environment

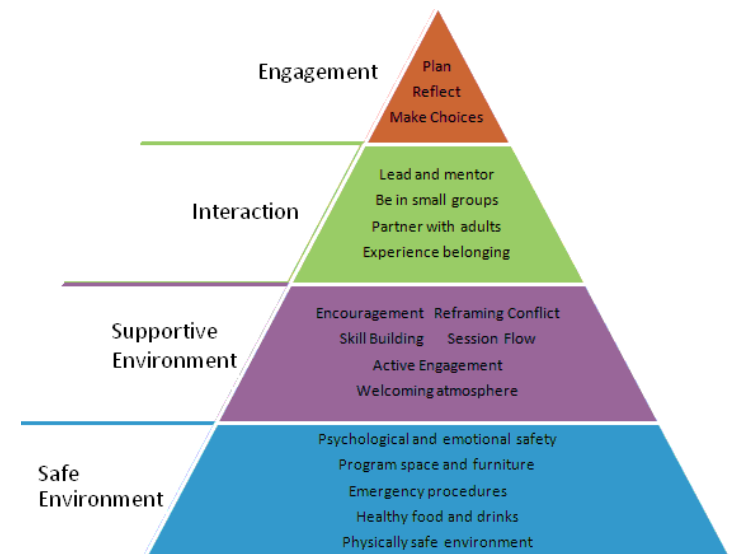
- Be inclusive of different learning styles, cultures, abilities and family structures. Utilize diverse images, games, music, etc.
- Choose encouraging words and develop an encouraging learning environment
- Maintain a professional appearance and wear staff identification
- Use group work, partnering, and aid in building relationships

## Interaction

- Youth partner with each other and adults
- Regardless of age - have high expectations for all participants
- Encourage youth choice and self-directed learning opportunities
- Develop a learning environment where youth experience belonging
- Be prepared so you have time for youth choice and adult/youth interaction

## Engagement

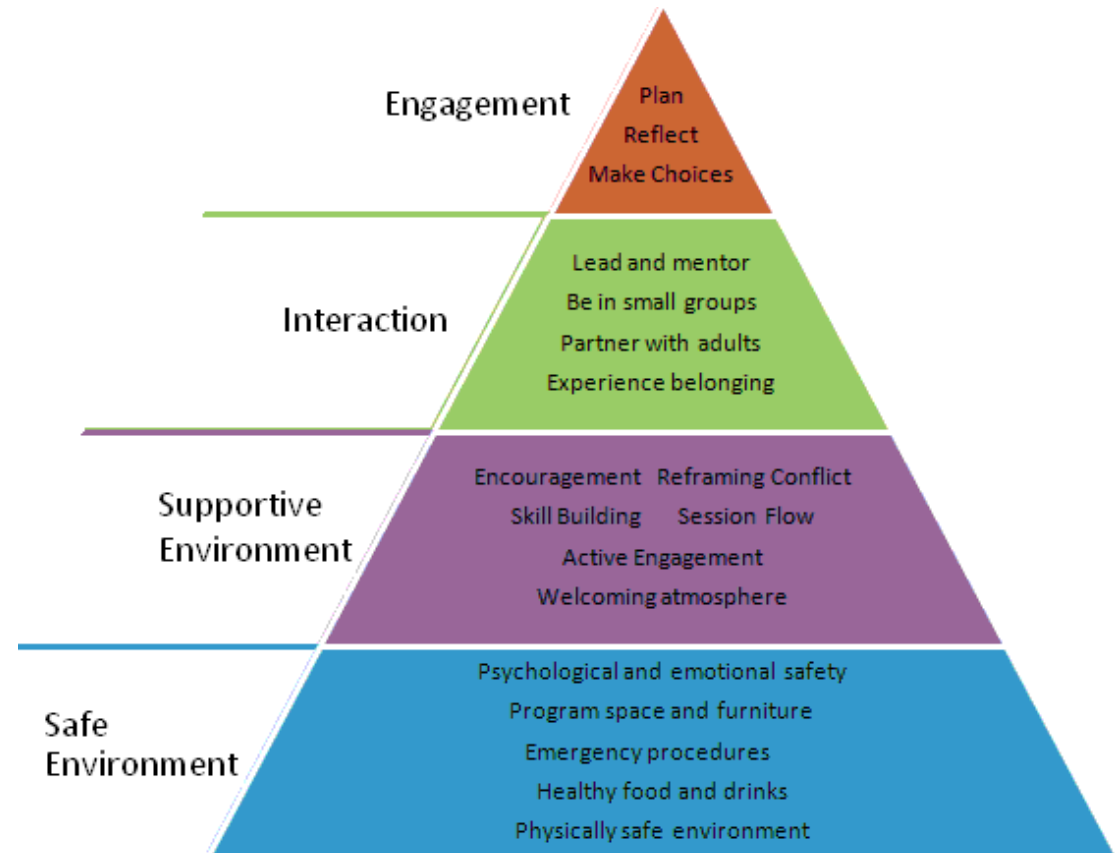
- Activities are hands-on and encourage multiple types of learning
- Include and facilitate youth choice
- Activities are challenging
- Reflection – all classes end with a reflection question and discussion time



# PROGRAM QUALITY – INTENTIONAL INCLUSIVITY

Instructors are expected to **intentionally create inclusive environments**. Examples include:

- Use images/books/music, etc that is diverse across age, gender, ability, race, culture, nationality, sexual orientation, etc.  
Example: if you are leading a session on the Winter Olympics include athletes/sports from the Paralympics and Special Olympics, athletes from multiple countries, etc.
- Religious holidays are not neutral and should only be used as a relevant instructional tool.  
Example: Learning about Dia de los Muertos as a cultural celebration in Spanish class is a relevant instructional tool. Making Christmas ornaments in an art class or doing an Easter egg hunt in dance class are not relevant instruction.
- Use inclusive language when talking about families.  
Example: Say “bring this home and show it to someone you love” or “share this with your family” rather than saying, “bring this home to your mom and dad.” Do not make assumptions about family structure.
- Create learning opportunities that draw on multiple learning styles.
- Create flexible plans to find time to draw on the unique passions and abilities of your group of youth.



# CURRICULUM QUALITY – WHAT IS GANAG?

GANAG refers to a teaching schema where “a teacher using the ‘Teaching Schema for Master Learners’ designs lesson deliberately so as to prepare students for learning, help them connect new information prior to learning, and cement those ideas or skills. When the schema is used regularly for planning, it becomes automatic to think about teaching to the master learner” (Pollock 64).

Concepts and ideas presented in the following table are extracted from Jane Pollock’s text, *Improving Student Learning One Teacher at a Time*.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>G</b> Set the Goal/Benchmark/Objective</p>	<p>Instructor (and/or youth) identifies goals/benchmarks for a lesson along with specific daily content objectives. At the end of the day’s session, the instructor and participants can evaluate if they have accomplished their goals and whether to move on or perhaps re-visit concepts if needed.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A</b> Access Prior Knowledge</p>	<p>The goal is to provide stimulus that relates in some way to the session content. The instructor plans an activity, question or demonstration to spur connections to previous learning, life experience or knowledge of subject matter.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>N</b> Acquire New Information</p>	<p>Present new information to youth through a variety of activities – ideally connecting to their senses (i.e. hearing a presentation or a lecture, seeing a video, hands-on cooking, etc.). Additionally, sessions include a combination of declarative and procedural content. Declarative = facts &amp; information. Procedural = skills &amp; processes.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>A</b> Apply Knowledge</p>	<p>Knowledge gains meaning if you can apply it again in a reliable and accurate way. Youth need hands-on opportunities to explore, test, challenge, and apply content.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>G</b> Generalize or Summarize</p>	<p>A reflective exit activity that demonstrates youth understanding is essential in providing teaching for mastery learning. Reflection allows youth the time to synthesize their experience/learning within the context of the group. Additionally, this element provides instructors with insight on participant learning and guidance on pacing future sessions.</p>

# SESSION LAYOUT – SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

<b>Theme: Get to know each other and the book</b>	<b>Session 1:</b> Get to know each other and create the Group Reflection Poster.	<b>Session 2:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting (RRR)	<b>Session 3:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 4:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting
<b>Theme: Reading, Retention and Reflection</b>	<b>Session 5:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 6:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 7:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 8:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting
<b>Theme: Character Development, Sharing Characters and RRR</b>	<b>Session 9:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intro to Character Development</li> <li>• Plan for sharing the Character</li> <li>• Reading, Retaining and Reflecting</li> </ul>	<b>Session 10:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 11:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 12:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting
<b>Theme: Reading, Retention and Reflection, and Finish book</b>	<b>Session 13:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 14:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting	<b>Session 15:</b> Reading, Retaining and Reflecting (BOOK SHOULD BE COMING TO THE END)	<b>Session 16:</b> Finished with the book. Moving into Character Creation.
<b>Theme 5 Trivia, Create Characters and Sharing with the community</b>	<b>Session 17:</b> Character Creation, and sharing them with the community	<b>Session 18:</b> “I Would Like You To Meet...”	<b>Supplementary Session 1:</b> Character Development Writing Exercise	<b>Supplementary Session 2:</b> Trivia-Wonder Trivia- When You Reach Me

# FACILITATOR NOTES AND TIPS

## Small Reading Groups:

- Ideally, each group will have an adult staff/volunteer or an older youth to lead the group and keep it on track.
- Having an older youth role model active participation would give them a great opportunity to lead.

## First Day of Reading Tips:

- If you already know the youth have pre-determined reading group lists prepared.
- If you are just meeting the youth, consider reading the first day in a large group, and ask for volunteers. Notice group dynamics before assigning group. Consider asking the youth for suggestion in how to determine small reading groups.

Reading out loud in front of peers can be challenging and stressful for some youth, it may take them a little while to get comfortable with this concept. Pressuring the youth may cause them to shut down all together. Allowing for youth to get comfortable at their own pace will be advantages for everyone. Always encourage active listening, and remind youth that even if they choose not to read aloud, they will still need to participate in the group reflection at the end of each session.

Every once in a while, ask youth if they would like to read as a large group, in pairs or alone silently. This may break up the monotony of reading in the same small groups every session. Allow for different learning styles and share power in decision making with youth.

Observe youth during reading time, watch for any signs of youth feeling uncomfortable and check in with them.

Remember to watch group dynamics and youth body language. Reading can be hard for some youth. This course should not single youth out - but rather, encourage them to learn to love to read!

Incorporate the characters in the book into your group/classroom, talk about the characters as if they are a part of the group.

Consider finding/using a talking piece that reflects characters or concepts from the book.

- The talking piece can be used: during check in questions, “What Happened Last Week?”, “What Will Happen Today?”, during small group reading, and while working on the “Group Reflection Poster”.
- A talking piece can be used to signify whose turn it is to speak. The person holding the talking piece has the floor while everyone else practices active listening skills.



## FACILITATOR NOTES AND TIPS - CONTINUED

What Happened Today?: Each youth will share something new they learned in the book at the end of each session. Encourage youth to prepare 2-3 concepts/ideas to share - this way they will have a backup plan if someone shares one of their ideas. Remind the youth they are all reading the same book, so they should be creative with the ideas/concepts they will share. Was there a new character introduced? Did someone reveal something new about themselves? Was there a funny joke? A new word they learned? A part of history referenced? The notion here is that youth will pay more attention to the reading because they know they have the opportunity to share something at the end. This also “tests” for retention and connections to the characters.

ALWAYS remember to bring the Group Reflection Poster to each session. It is essential that the facilitator is prepared and following through with group expectations. This will role model planning and organization for the youth, as well as, serve as a daily visual reminder of the importance of reflection and retention.

When using Options for What Happened Last Week? What Will Happen Today? and What Happened Today?, remember to consider your group time and use two options that will fit into your agenda. For example, there probably won't be time in a session to do more than one small group options. So consider using a combination the options.

Make sure to choose a book that can be finished during group time/in the allotted amount of sessions. Based on the length of the book chosen you will want to determine how many pages you will have to read each session, ideally you will be reading 15-20 pages during sessions 2-16 (this should get the group through a 200-300 page book easily)

Character Development and Sharing the Characters: In session 9 the group will work through the Intro to Character Development activity. During this activity the youth will learn how to develop a character and why character development is important to a story. After this session, continue to remind participants that they will be creating their own character at the end of the course. How the characters are shared should be determined by the youth. They may decide to share their characters with each other on the last day, by creating posters or reading their worksheets. If time and resources permit, the group might decide to present their characters at a family event or print a compiled book to take home. They may also decide to create posters to be hung up at school or in the classroom. As the facilitator, it is important that you also do some work behind the scenes to make sure the youth have a venue to share their characters.

There are three supplemental activities for the course:

- Character Development Writing Assignment
- *Wonder* Trivia
- *When You Reach Me* Trivia

If feasible, consider giving the youth the book at the end of the session OR giving them a new book to encourage reading at home.

# GLOSSARY OF ICE BREAKERS/WARM UPS

- 1. 3 THINGS IN COMMON** (great for new groups)  
Each participant pairs up with another participant who she doesn't know. They must find three things that they have in common. Then each pair of youth presents their findings to the rest of the group.
- 2. TOSS THE BALL** (requires a ball)  
Get in a circle. Toss the ball around and say the name of the person you toss it to.
- 3. NAME MEMORY**  
Go around in a circle. 1st person says her name; 2nd person says her name and also says the 1st person's name over again, and so on all the way around the circle. The last person has to repeat everyone's name. As a variation, have each person say her name AND what plant she would be, if she could be a plant. This way there is more to remember than simply people's names, which makes it more interesting. OR, have everyone say an adjective plus her name, but the adjective must begin with the same letter...for example, Daring David, Ridiculous Rick, Wonderful Wendy, etc.
- 4. THE BIG WIND BLOWS**  
Get in a tight circle, sitting in chairs, knee-to-knee. Group leader begins by standing outside the circle and saying "The big wind blows for everyone who \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)." Whoever fits the criteria and the group leader who began the game must get up and move to another vacated seat within the circle. There will be one person who ends up without a place to sit in the circle. This person continues the game by saying "The big wind blows for anyone who \_\_\_\_\_" and the game continues on. The catch is that when changing seats in the circle, no running is allowed. Everyone must hop on one foot, or walk on all fours, or whatever. The big wind could blow for anyone wearing jeans, people who have older sisters, people who ate breakfast, people who listen to Brittany Spears, etc.
- 5. PICTURE GUESSING GAME**  
Everybody draws a picture that expresses something about themselves. The drawings are collected. One by one, the drawings are "pulled out of a hat" and held up, and the group tries to guess who drew it. Whoever guesses correctly is the next one to choose a drawing 'out of the hat' to hold up for the group to guess. When someone guesses correctly, the person who drew the picture explains it's meaning to the group.
- 6. ANIMAL CHARADES**  
Get in groups of three. Each group is given the name of an animal. They must come up with a way to demonstrate that animal, or act it out as a team. Then each group presents their demonstration to the group, who guessed what animal it is.
- 7. ZIP/ZAP/ZOP**  
Get in a circle. Someone begins by pointing to another person in the circle and saying "ZIP!" That person then points to yet another person and says "ZAP!" That person points to another person and says "ZOP!" This continues, but the words must be said in order: ZIP, ZAP, ZOP. If someone makes a mistake and says a word out of order, that person is out of the game. Eventually, the circle dwindles to just a few people, then to only 2 people, who are staring at each other, yelling ZIP!, ZAP!, ZOP! Until one of them makes a mistake.

## **8. EVOLUTION**

Everyone begins as an 'egg' (so people have to pretend to be an egg). Find another egg and play 'rock, paper, scissors' with the other egg. Whoever wins gets to 'evolve' into a chicken (so now the chickens have to pretend to be chickens). Whoever loses remains an egg. Then the chickens must find other chickens in order to play rock, paper, scissors. The eggs must play with other eggs. Whoever wins evolves. Whoever loses de-evolves. The loser between two chickens will become an egg again. The winner will become a dinosaur and pretend to be that. Loser eggs remain eggs. Again, like animals play rock, paper, scissors with like animals. Losers de-evolve into what they were previously. Winners between two dinosaurs evolve into the highest form of evolution: either ELVIS or the ENLIGHTENED ONE, in which case they would pretend to be ELVIS or sit down and say OM, depending on how you choose to play the game.

## **9. ORB**

Get in a circle. Toss an imaginary ORB around the circle. It changes shape, size, and noise when it transfers hands. Whoever catches the ORB demonstrates how heavy it is and what shape it takes by the way she catches it. The person who catches it also has to make the noise of the ORB, which also changes from person to person.

## **10. BLIND POLYGON** (required blindfolds and a rope)

The group is blindfolded. They must form a perfect square, triangle, or whatever, using a rope. They all must have at least one hand on the rope at all times!

## **11. ISLAND**

Find a big stump, rock, or make a circle on the ground two feet in diameter, and tell the group this the 'island.' The entire group must figure out a way to stay on the island for two minutes. If you have a large group, you will want to identify more than one island and have multiple small groups taking part in the challenge simultaneously. You can then rotate, so each group gets to try each challenge.

## **12. ORDER OUT OF CHAOS**

Everyone is blindfolded. Each person gets a number. They must line up in order of height without talking. OR...the group must line up according to eye or hair color (darkest to lightest), height, etc....without saying a word.

## **13. MASS STAND UP**

Have the group sit in a circle with backs to the middle. Everyone links elbows with the person sitting next to her. Then, challenge them to try to stand up as a group. A lot tougher than it sounds!

## **14. HUMAN KNOT**

Have the crew stand in a tight circle, shoulder-to-shoulder, and place their hands in the center. Now, have them grab a couple of hands, but make sure no one grabs a pair of hands belonging to the same person, or grabs either of the hands of the person standing directly next to them. Then, unravel the knot you've just created without having anyone break their grip...good luck! Remind the group to be gentle and communicate while they unwind so no one gets hurt. If they break the chain in the process, let them start over.

**15. HAVE YOU EVER?**

Group stands in a circle. Each takes a turn asking a question, "Have you ever\_\_\_\_\_"(filling in the blank). Those who have, answer yes by walking to the center of the circle and slapping a "high five" with whoever else has done the action.

**16. INTRO TO THE LEFT**

Group sits in a circle. Each person has to introduce the person on the left. Take five minutes (total) to talk to both the person on your left and the person on your right. One by one, each person introduces the person on their left.

**17. WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW**

Hand out slips of scratch paper and ask people to write down something about themselves that they think nobody else in the room knows. Then collect the sheets, shuffle them, hand them out again (making sure nobody gets their own). Each person reads out what is on their slip, one by one, and the group tries to guess who wrote it. This really gets people laughing! Unless you have a lot of time, I wouldn't recommend it for groups larger than 15 or so, because these tidbits about people tend to be surprising and prompt curiosity and discussion.

**18. 2 TRUTHS AND A LIE**

Two Truths and a Lie is a good game to break the chill- especially if the group doesn't know each other well. Each person has to tell 2 truths about themselves and one lie and the others have to guess which is the lie (all three statements should be believable, yet a bit wacky, so that it's hard to figure out). Each person tells two truths and one un-truth about themselves, then everyone else has to guess which is the un-truth. The key is to make the truths as outrageous as the untruths.

**NUMBER LINE UP**

19. With eyes closed or blind folded the group must numbers off from 1 to total number of people present. Every group member must say a number, only once. No one can say the same number or speak at the same time, or the group starts over. When the group reaches the last number, everyone has said a number and no one spoke at the same time the group has completed the challenge. Option, do it multiple times attempting to increase speed.

## GLOSSARY OF CHECK IN QUESTIONS

1. At what age is a person an adult? Why do you think so?
2. If could change one rule that your family has, what would you change?
3. What is something that makes your family special?
4. Of all the things you are learning, what do you think will be the most useful when you are an adult?
5. What makes you a good friend?
6. How would the world be different if animals could talk?
7. Would you cheat on a test if you knew you would not get caught? Why or why not?
8. If you could grow up to be famous, what would you want to be famous for?
9. If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do?
10. What is the best gift you have ever given? Why was it so special?
11. What is the hardest thing about being a kid?
12. If you were a teacher and the kids in your class would not listen to you, what would you do?
13. Where is your favorite place in the world?
14. If you could give one gift to every single child in the world, what gift would you give?
15. If you could travel back in time three years and visit your younger self, what advice would you give yourself?
16. What five words do you think most describe you?
17. If you could invent something that would make life easier for people, what would you invent?
18. When was a time that you felt lucky?
19. If you house was on fire and you could only save one thing (people and animals are already safe), what would you save?
20. If you won the lottery, what is the first thing you would do?
21. If you could have chosen your own first name, other than your current one, what would it be?
22. What do you think would be the coolest thing about being blind?
23. What is your biggest fear?
24. Finish this sentence: I admire people who....
25. If you could make one rule that everyone in the world had to follow, what rule would you make? Why?

<b>SESSION 1</b>	<b>GOAL: GET TO EACH OTHER AND THE BOOK</b>	<b>MATERIALS NEEDED</b>
<b>ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 20 MINUTES</b>	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and Overview of the course</li> <li>• Ice Breaker: Partner Interviews (see worksheet in addendum)</li> <li>• Reading Survey (see worksheet in addendum)</li> <li>• Create Community Standards (see curriculum plan in addendum)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note cards and pencils for ice breaker.</li> </ul> Copies of (from addendum): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading survey</li> <li>• Partner Interviews</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 1 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the book to the youth, ask a youth to read the summery out loud Give each youth their own copy, and have them write their name inside the book.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enough of the books for all youth to have their own copy</li> <li>• Collect all books at the end of each session and bring back each week</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 2 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In small groups read the first 10 pages (or natural chapter break)</li> <li>• While reading youth should note any words or phrases they don't know/understand</li> <li>• While reading in small groups, youth should be thinking about what they will add to the group reflection poster.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See Tips for First Day of Reading</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION ACTIVITY 20 MINUTES</b>	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a Group Reflection Poster (See activity write up in the addendum)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poster Board</li> <li>• Markers/Pencils</li> <li>• Bring the Group Reflection Poster to every session!</li> </ul>

Suggestions for making today's activities more challenging:

Throughout this course, suggestions for making each session more challenging will lay in the amount of time spent reading and reading level of book chosen by the facilitator.

Suggestions for making today's activities less challenging:

To make this course less challenging consider a shorter book or a shorter time frame for reading. The facilitator could also consider reading the book out loud to the large group (this may or may not work for some groups); youth could listen, follow along as the facilitator reads, take notes, and draw what they hear. As long as they are actively listening, thinking of questions, concepts to reflect on with the larger group, and attempting to get "into" and connect with the story.

SESSIONS 2-8	GOAL: READING, RETAINING AND REFLECTING	MATERIALS NEEDED
ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 10 MINUTES	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an Ice Breaker or Check In Question from the Glossary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what is needed for the ice breaker</li> </ul>
ACTIVITY TYPE 1 5 MINUTES	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Happened Last Session? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on what happened in the book last session and review the Group Reflection Poster</li> </ul> </li> <li>What Is Going to Happen Today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask youth for predictions on today’s reading (see “What is Going to Happen” in addendum)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Poster</li> </ul>
ACTIVITY TYPE 2 35 MINUTES	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>READ in small groups</li> <li>Remember to pay attention to youth dynamics and watch body language</li> <li>This can be a long time for youth to sit still and read, for some youth drawing or non-invasive/disruptive activities can be negotiated as needed. Youth will need to be actively listening at all times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Books</li> <li>paper for drawing or notes</li> <li>pencils</li> </ul>
REFLECTION ACTIVITY 10 MINUTES	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Happened Today? Each youth will add a new concept, idea or word to the Group Reflection Poster.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Paper</li> <li>Pencils/markers</li> </ul>

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<b>SESSION 9</b>	<b>GOAL: READING, RETAINING AND REFLECTING AND INTRODUCE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AND PLAN FOR SHARING CHARACTERS.</b>	<b>MATERIALS NEEDED</b>
<b>ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 5 MINUTES</b>	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In place of an icebreaker - do the What Happened Last Week and What Will Happen Today? (See curriculum plan in addendum)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what is needed for the ice breaker</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 1 30 MINUTES</b>	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce Character Development</li> <li>Group completes Character Creation Worksheet</li> <li>Discussion on how to Share the Characters with the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Poster</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 2 20 MINUTES</b>	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note 15 minutes less reading time today</li> <li>READ in small groups, or whatever format works best for the group</li> <li>Remember to pay attention to youth dynamics and watch body language</li> <li>This can be a long time for youth to sit still and read, for some youth drawing or a non-invasive/destructive can be negotiated as needed. Youth will need to be actively listening at all times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Books</li> <li>paper for drawing or notes</li> <li>pencils</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION ACTIVITY 5 MINUTES</b>	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Happened Today? Each youth will add a new concept, idea or word to the Group Reflection Poster.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Paper</li> <li>Pencils/markers</li> </ul>

Suggestions for making today's activities more challenging:

Throughout this course, suggestions for making each session more challenging will lay in the amount of time spent reading and reading level of book chosen by the facilitator.

Suggestions for making today's activities less challenging:

To make this course less challenging consider a shorter book or a shorter time frame for reading. The facilitator could also consider reading the book out loud to the large group (this may or may not work for some groups); youth could listen, follow along as the facilitator reads, take notes, and draw what they hear. As long as they are actively listening, thinking of questions, concepts to reflect on with the larger group, and attempting to get "into" and connect with the story.



SESSIONS 10-15	GOAL: READING, RETAINING AND REFLECTING	MATERIALS NEEDED
ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 10 MINUTES	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an Ice Breaker or Check In Question from the Glossary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what is needed for the ice breaker</li> </ul>
ACTIVITY TYPE 1 5 MINUTES	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Happened Last Session? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on what happened in the book last session and review the Group Reflection Poster (see “What Happened Last Session?” in addendum for format suggestions)</li> </ul> </li> <li>What Is Going to Happen Next? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask youth for predictions on today’s reading (see “What is Going to Happen Next?” in addendum for format suggestions)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Poster</li> </ul>
ACTIVITY TYPE 2 35 MINUTES	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>READ in small groups, or whatever format works best for the group</li> <li>Remember to pay attention to youth dynamics and watch body language</li> <li>This can be a long time for youth to sit still and read, for some youth drawing or a non-invasive/destructive can be negotiated as needed. Youth will need to be actively listening at all times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Books</li> <li>paper for drawing or notes</li> <li>pencils</li> </ul>
REFLECTION ACTIVITY 10 MINUTES	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Happened Today? Each youth will add a new concept, idea or word to the Group Reflection Poster. (see “What Happened Today?” in addendum for format suggestions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Paper</li> <li>Pencils/markers</li> </ul>

Suggestions for making today’s activities more challenging:

Throughout this course, suggestions for making each session more challenging will lay in the amount of time spent reading and reading level of book chosen by the facilitator.

Suggestions for making today’s activities less challenging:

To make this course less challenging consider a shorter book or a shorter time frame for reading. The facilitator could also consider reading the book out loud to the large group (this may or may not work for some groups); youth could listen, follow along as the facilitator reads, take notes, and draw what they hear. As long as they are actively listening, thinking of questions, concepts to reflect on with the larger group, and attempting to get “into” and connect with the story.

SESSION 16	GOAL: FINISH READING BOOK!!! CELEBRATE	MATERIALS NEEDED
<b>ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an Ice Breaker or Check In Question from the Glossary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what is needed for the ice breaker</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 1 5 MINUTES</b>	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Happened Last Session? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect on what happened in the book last session and review the Group Reflection Poster (see “What is Going to Happen Next?” in addendum for format suggestions)</li> </ul> </li> <li>What Will Happen Today? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask youth for predictions on today’s reading (see attached Write up for format suggestions)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Poster</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 2 35 MINUTES</b>	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read in small groups, or whatever format works best for the group</li> <li>Remember to pay attention to youth dynamics and watch body language</li> <li>This can be a long time for youth to sit still and read, for some youth drawing or a non-invasive/destructive can be negotiated as needed. Youth will need to be actively listening at all times.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Books</li> <li>paper for drawing or notes</li> <li>pencils</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION ACTIVITY 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What Happened Today? Each youth will add a new concept, idea or word to the Group Reflection Poster. (see “What Happened Today?” in addendum for format suggestions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Group Reflection Paper</li> <li>Pencils/markers</li> </ul>

Suggestions for making today’s activities more challenging:

Throughout this course, suggestions for making each session more challenging will lay in the amount of time spent reading and reading level of book chosen by the facilitator.

Suggestions for making today’s activities less challenging:

To make this course less challenging consider a shorter book or a shorter time frame for reading. The facilitator could also consider reading the book out loud to the large group (this may or may not work for some groups); youth could listen, follow along as the facilitator reads, take notes, and draw what they hear. As long as they are actively listening, thinking of questions, concepts to reflect on with the larger group, and attempting to get “into” and connect with the story.

<b>SESSION 17</b>	<b>GOAL: YOUTH CREATE CHARACTERS</b>	<b>MATERIALS NEEDED</b>
<b>ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an Ice Breaker or Check In Question from the Glossary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what is needed for the ice breaker</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 1 5 MINUTES</b>	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the purpose of this activity, remind the youth about the project they decided on in session 9. See curriculum in addendum</li> </ul>	
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 2 25 MINUTES</b>	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Character Creation Worksheets (in addendum)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Character Development Worksheets</li> <li>pens/pencils</li> <li>blank paper</li> <li>colored pencils</li> <li>markers</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION ACTIVITY 20 MINUTES</b>	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth Share the characters they created with each other</li> <li>Reflection questions embedded in curriculum in addendum</li> </ul>	

Suggestions for making today's activities more challenging:  
 Have youth start writing without the worksheet; encourage them to dream about their character writing everything they can think of.

Suggestions for making today's activities less challenging:  
 Youth could create characters in partners or groups

SESSION 18	GOAL: “I WOULD LIKE YOU TO MEET...”	MATERIALS NEEDED
<b>ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP # MINUTES</b>	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an Ice Breaker or Check In Question from the Glossary</li> </ul>	
	<p>Session #18 is intentionally left blank in this course. Youth may need this time to continue their work on character creation, develop the project they will share with the community or for actually inviting family, teachers and/or peers to come and see their work. Throughout the course talk to youth about this and make a plan for session 18 for how they would like to introduce their character to the group.</p>	
<p><b><u>This session is intentionally left blank.</u></b>  Use this day to share characters with the community. If the sharing will happen out of group time (at a pre-arranged family night, or by hanging up posters), use one of the supplement activities in this session. This session can also be used to extend the youths time to work on character creation and developing their sharing project.</p>		

<b>SUPPLEMENTAL SESSION 1</b>	<b>GOAL: CHARACTER CREATION WRITING EXERCISE</b>	<b>MATERIALS NEEDED</b>
<b>ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an Ice Breaker or Check In Question from the Glossary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what is needed for the ice breaker</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 1 5 MINUTES</b>	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduce the purpose of this activity, remind the youth about the project they decided on in session 9.</li> </ul>	
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 2 25 MINUTES</b>	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Character Creation Writing Exercise (Insert this activity between session 17 and 18. This activity will give youth another lens into the creation of their character, practice creative writing and imagine what their character might do in a particular situation). See addendum for full “Character Creation” curriculum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Character Development Worksheets</li> <li>pens/pencils</li> <li>dice (4-5)</li> <li>blank paper</li> <li>colored pencils</li> <li>markers</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION ACTIVITY 20 MINUTES</b>	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth share their writing exercise</li> <li>Reflection questions embedded in curriculum in addendum</li> </ul>	
Suggestions for making today’s activities more challenging: Have youth start writing without the writing exercise prompt; encourage them to dream about their character writing everything they can think of.		
Suggestions for making today’s activities less challenging: Youth could create characters in partners or groups		

<b>SUPPLEMENTAL SESSION 2</b>	<b>GOAL: TRIVIA GAME FOR WONDER OR WHEN YOU REACH ME</b>	<b>MATERIALS NEEDED</b>
<b>ICE BREAKER/ WARM UP 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>ACCESS PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Choose an Ice Breaker or Check In Question from the Glossary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine what is needed for the ice breaker</li> </ul>
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 1 5 MINUTES</b>	<b>NEW INFORMATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the process of the Trivia Game</li> <li>Create teams</li> </ul>	
<b>ACTIVITY TYPE 2 35 MINUTES</b>	<b>APPLICATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Play Trivia- follow game instructions. Insert this activity between session 16 and 17, after the book is finished before the youth start the Character Creation. See addendum for full “Trivia” curriculum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large Trivia Game Board</li> <li>trivia questions</li> <li>paper/pencils</li> <li>prize for everyone ☺</li> </ul>
<b>REFLECTION ACTIVITY 10 MINUTES</b>	<b>GENERALIZATION:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask youth the following reflection questions: What questions in the game stood out to you, why? What will you remember most about the book, the theme and/or the characters? What about the book relates to your life, why?</li> </ul>	
<p>Suggestions for making today’s activities more challenging: Smaller teams or pairs. Allow students to have their books open during trivia for reference.</p>		
<p>Suggestions for making today’s activities less challenging: Two large teams, possibly with older youth/adults on the teams. Do not allow students to use books during trivia for reference.</p>		

The following pages include all printed supplementary materials including: forms, worksheets, handouts, etc.



## PARTNER INTERVIEW!

My Name:

My Partner's Name:

1. Why did you sign up for this group?
2. What is your favorite book? Why?
3. What is one thing you want everyone in this group to know about you?

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# CURRICULUM PLAN: COMMUNITY STANDARDS

**Purpose:** Engage youth in the development of community standards for the group

**Time:** 15-20 minutes

**Materials:** Butcher paper, poster board or flip chart and markers

**Planning:** Title your large piece of paper with Chapters, Characters and Creation. Draw a large circle in the middle of the paper, the inside of this circle will represent the behaviors or expectations the group members want in the group.

**Procedure:** Explain to the youth they will be creating their community standards, by defining the behaviors they think are appropriate and inappropriate for their group. Have youth come up and write their ideas for behaviors they want in their group inside the circle (i.e. participate, read, have fun, be respectful, learn something new). If youth identify something they don't want to happen in their group, they should write this outside of the circle (i.e. fighting, bullying...). After everyone has had the opportunity to add something to the poster, they are agreed upon invite them to sign their name on the poster.

**Discussion:** Ask everyone if they know what it means to sign your name on something?

**Reflection:** How did it feel to create your own community expectations? Is there anything you think you will have a hard time doing/not doing? What should be the consequence of breaking this contract?

# READING SURVEY

Name:

1. Do you like to read chapter books?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Sometimes
  
2. Do you feel comfortable reading out loud in front of other kids and adults?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Sometimes
  
3. I can sit still and read a book for:
  - a. 10 minutes
  - b. 15 minutes
  - c. 20 minutes

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Name:

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3. I can sit still and read a book for:
  - a. 10 minutes
  - b. 15 minutes
  - c. 20 minutes

# CURRICULUM PLAN: GROUP REFLECTION POSTER

**Purpose:** Create Group Reflection Poster, drawing the main character(s) of the book. After reading the first chapter of the book, ask the students to collectively draw a group reflection poster they will add to throughout the session.

**Time:** 15-20 minutes

**Materials:** Butcher paper, poster board or flip chart and markers

**Planning:** Hang the large piece of paper up at the front of the room.

**Procedure:** One by one ask youth to come up and add a body part or word/concept to the paper. The main point is to begin to create a picture representing the book; this picture will become a member of the group. Remind the group that this will be added to every week, so they should be careful of how big they draw or write to save room. By the end time everyone has added something the group should have created a picture of the main character(s) (i.e. head/face/body/arms/unique characteristics...)

**Discussion:** As the youth are adding things, engage everyone in a discussion about three main concepts: reflection, bringing a character to life, and capturing new information.

Explain that reflection is a good way to really remember something, if you remind yourself right away of certain details you are more likely to remember them and be able to apply them to your life. Capturing your thoughts in notes and drawings will also engage your memory and recall.

When reading a book your brain imagines what the characters might look like, smell like, sound like and act like. Your brain brings the characters to life and creates a picture. The group reflection poster will help the youth see how each other perceive the characters and their personalities.

Throughout the book the storyline will develop and build on itself. By taking notes the group can remember new information as it comes up and refer to throughout the process.

**Reflection:** When you look at the Group Reflection poster what stands out to you? Where do you see this story going?

## CURRICULUM PLAN: WHAT HAPPENED LAST SESSION?

**Purpose:** Have the youth lead themselves in a reflection of last session's readings. Do this before you take the poster out. This activity checks for retention, engagement and excitement. This can also be a way to bring all youth up to speed on the reading, if they missed the previous session.

**Time:** 5-15 minutes

**Materials:** Group Reflection Poster, thin tipped markers, pens, colored pencils and talking piece. Also see Options for specific materials in procedures section.

**Planning:** Create Group Reflection Poster in first session, bring poster to every session

### Procedure Options:

- Large Group

**Youth Lead:** Ask a youth (or 2-3) to volunteer to lead a large group discussion about what happened in the book last session. Other youth should take turns raising their hands and sharing something they remember, a highlight or lowlight for them or new word/character. Consider using a talking piece.

- Small Groups:

**Arts and Crafts:** Provide group with an array of arts and crafts supplies and give them free range to create something that reminds them of what they remember from last session's reading. Give a short time frame for creating their objects and explain this is a fast challenge, roughly 5-7 minutes. Have each youth share their creation.

**Note Cards:** Provide each group of 3 with a note card and ask them to think of three things they remember from last sessions. One person will record on the note card, one person is the time keeper (5 minutes), one person will report back to the group.

**Skits:** Each group decides on a moment they remember from last session's reading and then acts it out for the rest of the group. If possible bring a box of costumes! The groups will have 5 minutes to create a 1 minute skit. If the space allows - set up a small theater, with an open area to preform and a few rows of chairs for the audience. When each group begins have the audience yell and act out "Lights, Camera, Action"

The motions are:

Lights - hands above head flashing like lights

Camera - one hand making a circle in front of eye, other hand twirling by the side of head/ear.

Action - Alligator type clap in front of body, signifying “movie scene clapboard”

- Breaking into Small Groups:

Use regular small reading groups

Count them off

Have them break into season of birthday groups (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer)

Have them line up by shoe size or height and break them in half

Have a bag of 4-5 different color buttons/objects. Ask each youth to pull one out of the bag, and then find their group by looking for people with matching buttons.

- Partners: In pairs have the youth talk about what they remember from last session. After about 2-3 minutes have the partners share an overview of their discussion.

- Individual: Have all the youth select a piece of paper to express their memories of last session’s readings. They could draw or write in any way they choose. Provide different options of lined and unlined paper, color pencils, pens, pencils, markers, pastels, etc) Invite each youth to share their creation.

Discussion: What similarities did we see, hear, and remember? What was easy to remember? What was hard to remember? How do you picture what you remember in your head? Pull out the Group Reflection Poster and hang it on the wall (ask a youth to hang it). Does anything need to be added?

Reflection: What did you see? What did you hear? What did someone else remember that you forgot about?

# CURRICULUM PLAN: PREDICTING WHAT WILL HAPPEN TODAY

**Purpose:** Practice imagining and predicting what might happen next, be creative in looking forward and anticipating what the writer's next move.

**Time:** 5-10 minute

**Materials:** Group Reflection Poster and talking piece. Also see Options specific materials in procedures section

**Planning:** Continue remind youth of this activity, preparing them for making prediction, possibly being wrong, using logic and reason.

## Procedure Options:

- Large Group

**Youth Lead:** Ask a youth (or 2-3) to volunteer to lead a large group discussion about what happened in the book last session. Other youth should take turns raising their hands and sharing something they remember, a highlight or lowlight for them or new word/character. Consider using a talking piece.

- Small Groups:

**Arts and Crafts:** Provide group with an array of arts and crafts supplies and give them free range to create something that reminds them of what they remember from last session's reading. Give a short time frame for creating their objects and explain this is a fast challenge, roughly 5-7 minutes. Have each youth share their creation.

**Note Cards:** Provide each group of 3 with a note card and ask them to think of three things they remember from last sessions. One person will record on the note card, one person is the time keeper (5 minutes), one person will report back to the group.

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- Breaking into Small Groups:

Use regular small reading groups

Count them off

Have them break into season of birthday groups (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer)

Have them line up by shoe size or height and break them in half

Have a bag of 4-5 different color buttons/objects. Ask each youth to pull one out of the bag, and then find their group by looking for people with matching buttons.

- Partners: In pairs have the youth talk about what they remember from last session. After about 2-3 minutes have the partners share an overview of their discussion.

- Individual: Have all the youth select a piece of paper to express their memories of last session’s readings. They could draw or write in any way they choose. Provide different options of lined and unlined paper, color pencils, pens, pencils, markers, pastels, etc) Invite each youth to share their creation.

Discussion: What similarities did we see or hear in our predictions?

Reflection: What did you see? What did you hear? What do you think of all the predictions we heard/saw?

# CURRICULUM PLAN: WHAT HAPPENED TODAY? GROUP REFLECTION POSTER

**Purpose:** Have the youth lead themselves in a discussion and reflection on what they read today.

**Time:** 5-15 minutes

**Materials:** Group Reflection Poster, thin tipped markers, pens, colored pencils. Also see options specific materials in procedures section

**Planning:** Create Group Reflection Poster in first session, bring poster to every session

## Procedure Options:

- Large Group

**Youth Lead:** Ask a youth (or 2-3) to volunteer to lead a large group discussion about what happened in the book last session. Other youth should take turns raising their hands and sharing something they remember, a highlight or lowlight for them or new word/character. Consider using a talking piece.

- Small Groups:

**Arts and Crafts:** Provide group with an array of arts and crafts supplies and give them free range to create something that reminds them of what they remember from last session's reading. Give a short time frame for creating their objects and explain this is a fast challenge, roughly 5-7 minutes. Have each youth share their creation.

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- Breaking into Small Groups:  
Use regular small reading groups  
Count them off  
Have them break into season of birthday groups (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer)  
Have them line up by shoe size or height and break them in half  
Have a bag of 4-5 different color buttons/objects. Ask each youth to pull one out of the bag, and then find their group by looking for people with matching buttons.
- Partners: In pairs have the youth talk about what they remember from last session. After about 2-3 minutes have the partners share an overview of their discussion.
- Individual: Have all the youth select a piece of paper to express their memories of last session’s readings. They could draw or write in any way they choose. Provide different options of lined and unlined paper, color pencils, pens, pencils, markers, pastels, etc) Invite each youth to share their creation.

Discussion: What similarities did we see, hear, and remember? Why do you think we remembered these things? Can you relate anything you read/learned/heard today to your life? you picture what you remember in your head?

Reflection: What did you see? What did you hear? What did someone else remember that you forgot about?

# CURRICULUM PLAN: INTRODUCTION CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

**Purpose:** Introduce the group to character development and begin talking about how the group would like to share their characters.

**Time:** Introduction: 5 minutes  
Group Worksheet: 15 minutes  
Discussion on ideas for sharing Characters: 10 minutes (this will be a multi-session discussion)

**Materials:** Character Creation Worksheet for everyone to see, create enlarged Character Creation Worksheet for group brainstorm (handmade, projected or printed), pens/pencils, makers, color pencils, flip chart/poster board/butcher paper.

**Planning:** Prep enlarged Character Creation Worksheet for group brainstorm (handmade, projected or printed)

**Procedure:** Tell the youth today we will create a character as a group. Explain that characters are the most important component of any story. Without them, there would be no entertainment within the story. Character development is an important skill to learn because characters are important parts of any creative writing from fiction, poetry and short stories. Character development is even important in biographies and autobiographies.

We should consider many factors when introducing a character to readers. All of the kinds of details we will be capturing or brainstorming are necessary to fully develop a character because each of them reveals a different part of the character's appearance or personality and gives background about that character's traits.

Examples:

**University Writing Center- Character Development: Creative Writing**  
<<http://writingcenter.tamu.edu/2008/types-communication/creative-writing-2/character-development-creative-writing/>>

- *Physical Details about the character:* Is he/she short, tall, thin, old, etc?
- *Physical environment surrounding the character:* Is he/she on a desert island, in an urban community, living in the mountains, etc?
- *The other characters surrounding the character:* What kinds of people does the character associate with?
- *The things that the character does:* Does he/she go to school, fly an airplane, eat pizza every night for dinner, etc?

- *The things that the character says or thinks:* These things reveal the character's feelings and opinions about things.

Character Development Tips- SandraMiller.com. 08 Jan. 2007

<<http://www.pgtc.com/~slmiller/characterdevelopment.htm>> 2006):

- *His/her family:* relationships, beliefs, habits, religion, activities, etc. We are all greatly influenced by our family.
- *His/her vices:* illnesses, drinking or swearing, compulsive spending, obsession with sweets, etc.
- *His/her pet peeves:* disorganization, grammatical mistakes, slow drivers, etc. These things say a lot about a character's personality.
- *His/her daily schedule:* school, work, errands, etc. The narrative must weave around the character's schedule, so it is good to detail it.
- *His/her strong point:* strength, determination, forgiveness, etc. This trait may help the character to overcome hardship in the narrative.
- *His/her nicknames:* Readers can learn a lot about a character by what his/her friends call them and why.

Then work the group through creating a character as group using the enlarged Character Creation Sheet. Allow all youth to add something to the character. Save the character the group created for reference in later activities.

Discussion: Ask everyone how it felt to create the character? Could they see this person being in their family, school, or neighborhood?

Finally talk to the youth about how they will be creating their own character at the end of the session and engage in a dialog regarding how they would like to share their characters with the each other, the school, their families, and/or their community.

This dialog may end in several ways. The group might decide to write a series of short stories, have a family night to share their work, create posters to hang up in the school or many other options. Remind the group of the time frame and resources available for project completion.

Reflection: Do you think you will be able to create your own character with a similar worksheet? Do you already have ideas for your character you would like to share with the group? Can you spend some time thinking about your character when you are riding the bus, falling asleep at night, eating lunch...?

# CURRICULUM PLAN: CHARACTER CREATION

- Purpose:** Create Characters for the project the youth have decided on. Youth will develop the character (personality, likes and dislikes, family, defining characteristics...) Depending on the final project with youth maybe writing summery, a chapter, creating a poster with details about the characters. This may be done individually, in pairs, or small groups.
- Time:** Introduction: 5 minutes  
Worksheet: 25 minutes  
Sharing: 20 minutes
- Materials:** Character Creation Worksheet, pens/pencils, makers, color pencils, printer paper, flip chart/poster board/butcher paper.
- Planning:** Complete the Intro to Character Development activity in session 9. Remind the youth in every session; that they will be creating their own characters towards the end of the course, and talk how they will be sharing their characters with their community (each other, the school, families...)
- Procedure:** Review discussion from Intro to Character Development and the character the group created together.
- Give each youth a Character Creation Worksheet. Allow at least 20 minutes for them to complete the worksheet. Provide youth with blank paper, markers and colored pencils in case any of them want to draw.
- Insert any work that will need to be accomplished before the youth share their creations with their community.
- Discussion:** Have all youth share the character they created. Facilitate a discussion, engaging all students in each other's creation!
- Reflection:** What was it like creating your characters? What was the best part? What was hard? Did your characters have any similarities to someone you know? To another character that was created today? How do you feel about sharing your creations with the community?

# CHARACTER CREATION!

Create your own character with the questions below. Skip any questions that do not apply to your character and add questions if you need to. Just have fun and use your imagination! When you are ready draw a picture of your character 😊

<i>Personal Questions</i>	
1. What is your characters real, birth name? What name do you use?	
2. Do your characters have a nickname? What is it, and where did they get it?	
3. What does your character look like? (hair, eyes, skin, apparent age, skin color, distinguishing features)	
4. How does your character dress most of the time?	
5. What does your character wear when they go to sleep?	
6. Do they wear any jewelry?	
7. What does your character think their best feature is?	
8. What's your characters birth date?	
9. Where do they live? Describe it.	
10. Do you they have a car? Describe it.	
11. What is their most prized possession? Why do they value it so much?	
12. What one word best describes your character?	
13. Does your character have any special talents? What are they?	

***Family Questions***

1. What is their family like?	
2. Who took care of them when they were little? What were those people like?	
3. Do they know their father? Do they have more than one? If so, what is he like?	
4. Do they know their mother? Do they have more than one? If so, what is she like?	
5. What is their parents' marriage like? Were they married? Are they still married?	
6. Do they have siblings? What are your characters sibling's names? What are they like?	
7. What's the worst thing one of the siblings ever did to your character? What's the worst thing your character has done to one of their siblings?	
8. When's the last time your character saw any member of their family? Where are they now?	
9. Did they ever meet any other family members? Who were they? What does your character think of them?	

***Childhood Questions***

1. What is your characters first memory?	
2. What was their favorite toy?	
3. What was their favorite game?	
4. Any non-family member adults stick out in your characters mind? Who were they, and how did you know them? Why do they stick out?	

5. Who is your characters best friend? What do they like about that friend?	
6. What is your characters best, childhood memory?	
7. What is your characters worst childhood memory?	
8. What are your characters life goals?	
9. Who was your characters idol when they were growing up?	
<b><i>School Questions</i></b>	
1. What grade is your character in?	
2. What is your characters teachers' name? What are they like?	
3. How does your character do in school?	
4. Who does your character sit with at lunch?	
5. What subject does your character like best in school? Like least in school?	
6. What does your character do after school?	
<b><i>Job Questions</i></b>	
1. Does your character have a job? What is it? Do they like it? If no job, where does your money come from?	
2. What is your characters boss or employer like?	
3. What are your characters co-workers like?	
4. What is something your character had to learn at work that they hated?	
5. Does your character tend to save or spend your money? Why?	

*Likes & Dislikes Questions*

1. What hobbies does your character have?	
2. Who is your characters best friend? Describe them and how you relate to them.	
3. Who is your characters worst enemy? Describe them and why they don't get along.	
4. What music does your character like?	
5. What song do they listen to all the time?	
6. What song is their favorite song? Why?	
7. What's been your characters favorite movie of all time?	
8. Have they read any good books? What were they?	
9. What do they watch on the Television?	
10. What does your character do on the weekends?	
11. What type of places do they hang out in with their friends?	
12. What type of places do they hang out alone?	
13. What annoys them more than anything else?	
14. What would be the perfect gift for your character?	
15. What's the most beautiful thing they have ever seen? Or heard?	





# CURRICULUM PLAN: CHARACTER CREATION WRITING EXERCISE

**Purpose:** Youth have the opportunity to dig deeper into their character creations. By creating an outing with their character, going to their place for dinner, writing a letter from the character or imagining what they might do when in a difficult situation.

**Time:** Introduction: 5 minutes  
Writing: 25 minutes  
Sharing: 20 minutes

**Materials:** Character Development Worksheet, pens/pencils, markers, color pencils, printer paper, flip chart/poster board/butcher paper.

**Planning:** Complete the Intro to Character Development activity and Character Creation Worksheet.  
Writing prompts provided below on a large piece of paper for youth to see.

**Procedure:** The number one way you learn more about your characters is simply by writing about them. One way to do this is to write scenes with your characters that may not be a part of your story, but which nonetheless help you learn about them.

Today you can choose a writing exercise that can help you learn more about your characters. Each of these exercises is fairly general; you should use the specific traits of your character and story to fill them in and write a scene from them.

Use the prompt below as guides for youth and/or allow them to come up with their own. You may also want to ask youth to close their eyes to tap into their imaginations. Ask prompts slowly so they can create images/ideas along the way. Option: tell youth they can stop listening and quietly start writing as soon as they have an idea or scene they are excited about, but should be respectful of others who are still imagining. If you choose this option, be sure to remind them it's not a race.

**Prompts:**

- Your character has invited you to lunch. Where does he/she meet you? What is ordered? What do you talk about?  
(This exercise helps you to learn more about your character through food preference--which can actually be useful in your story--and through casual conversation)

- Your character writes a letter to the reader or someone in their family, describing themselves, their goals and motivations. (This exercise gives you valuable insight into the way your characters think about and describe themselves.)
- It's a Sunday afternoon and your character's responsibilities are complete. What does he/she do to relax for the rest of the day? (This exercise gives you a deeper knowledge of your character through hobbies/leisure time activities.)
- Your character has an argument with a best friend or family member. How they feel? What do they want to do to resolve the situation? What ends up happening? (This exercise helps you to learn more about your character through handling adversity--which can be very telling!)
- Your main character invites you to his/her place for dinner. What sort of home does he/she have? How is it furnished? Any family, roommates, pets? What is served? (This exercise gives you insight via detailed description of your character's home environment-- which can be useful in your story--family, food preference, and any other details you work into it.)

Discussion: Have all youth share a part of their writing. Allow time for youth to ask each other question, role model this by asking questions and encouraging dialog.

Reflection: What was it like doing this writing exercise? What did you enjoy? What was challenging? Why did you make certain decisions? How did it feel to share your character with the group? What stood out for you in what you heard other youth reading?

## CURRICULUM PLAN: TRIVIA

Note: Trivia sets have been created (in addendum) for *Wonder* and *When You Reach Me*. You are use another book, the instructor will need to create categories, questions and answers.

To Play:

- Create a Trivia game board with butcher paper, overhead, dry erase board, or chalk board.
  - You will want to have removable pieces of paper for each point value to give to the youth to track their points.
- In small reading group, have each group determine a team name. You could decide to break the youth up into different teams for Trivia or have pairs.
- Have each team determine a “speaker, the answers will only be accepted from the “speaker”.
- Trivia can be played as an “open book game” allowing students to look through the book for answers. HOWEVER, each team will only be given 30 seconds to share their answer.
- Determine which team will go first by giving each team a die to roll, the team that rolls the highest number goes first. Then play continues to the left. (OR determine your own way)
- On each turn, the team may choose the category and point value.
- The question will be read one time; the team has 30 seconds to answer. If they do not answer in the allotted time or get the wrong answer, the team to the left can try to answers. The next team must answer right away, and the question will not be repeated. If that teams gets the answer incorrect, it will be passed on to other teams until the question is answered correctly or until the question returns to the original team. At this point, the question is dead and the facilitator should share the answer with the youth.
- Play continues to the left, same as above.
- Use your best judgment in determining right answers, youth may word answers differently.
- Once all questions have been played, have each team add up points and determine what they will wager for the Final Question.
- Once all wagers are locked in read the Final Question.
- Give teams 2 minutes to determine their answer.
- Each team should write their team name, wager and final answer down on a piece of paper.
- Collect the papers, and read the answers out loud.
- Tell the group the answer and determine who wins! If a team gets the Bonus question correct they add the points wagered to their total, if they get the Bonus question incorrect they subtract the points wagered from their total.
- If the facilitator decides to offer a reward, it should be for the entire group. NOT just the winners. The reward can be framed as something special for everyone for completing the book and participating in the Trivia game. The winning team could pick first.

Materials needed:

- Large game board and removable point values
- 1 rolling die for each team
- Paper and pencil for each team, to add up points and write bonus wager/answer

**Wonder Trivia Questions**

<b>Category</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>August</b>	What is August's nick name?	What is the funny thing the nurse kept doing the night August was born?	What is the name of August's school?	What is August birthdate?	What award did August win at the 5 <sup>th</sup> grade graduation?
	Answer: Auggie	Answer: Farting	Answer: Beecher Prep	Answer: October 10 <sup>th</sup>	Answer: Henry Ward Beecher Medal
<b>Friends</b>	Which one of August's friends moved to Connecticut?	Who took August on his first tour of his new school?	Who sat with August at lunch?	What did Miranda give to August?	What science fair project did Jack and August work on together?
	Answer: Christopher	Answer: Jack Will, Julian and Charlotte	Answer: Summer	Answer: Astronaut Helmet	Answer: The Spud Lamp, or potato battery
<b>Halloween</b>	What did summer want to be for Halloween?	Why does August think Halloween is the best holiday in the world?	Why did August go home sick on Halloween?	What did August dress up as on his third Halloween?	Why did Summer leave the Halloween party?
	Answer: a unicorn	Answer: He gets to dress up and go around like every other kid	Answer: He overheard Jack talking meanly about him.	Answer: Peter Pan	Answer: Because Savanna tried to talk her into "liking" Julian and hanging out with him.
<b>5<sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat</b>	What did August bring to the retreat in case he couldn't fall asleep at night?	What did August unpack from his bag and leave for his mom with a note?	Who didn't go on the retreat because they thought it was "dorky"?	What movie did everyone watch?	Who helped August and Jack in the cornfields?
	Answer: A book, The Lion and Witch and the Wardrobe	Answer: his stuffed bear, Baboo	Answer: Julian	Answer: The Sound of Music	Answer: Amos, Henry and Miles
<b>Family</b>	Who is August's family makes everyone laugh?	What are August's parents' names?	Who told Via she loved her more than anyone in the world?	Where is August's mom's family from?	What are the names of the two family pets?
	Answer: His dad	Answer: Isabel and Nate	Answer: Gran	Answer: Brazil	Answer: Daisy and Bear
<b>Final Question</b>	What was August's Precept? Answer: Everyone in the world should get a standing ovation at least once in their life because we all overcome the world. OR On the <i>walk home</i> after 5 <sup>th</sup> grade graduation what did Auggie's Mom thank him for? Answer: "For everything you have given us" "For coming into our lives. For being you."				

### When You Reach Me Trivia Questions

Category	100	200	300	400	500
<b>Miranda</b>	Name one of the two streets Miranda walks down:	Where does Miranda keep the letters?	What did Miranda propose for the Main Street Project	What does Miranda say to strangers on the street if she is afraid?	What does the Laughing man always call Miranda when he sees her?
	Answer: Broadway Amsterdam	Answer: In a box under her bed	Answer: A Playground	Answer: “Excuse me, do you happen to know what time it is?”	Answer: “Smart Kid”
<b>Friends</b>	Who was Miranda’s best friend when she was growing up?	Who works with Miranda and Annemarie at Jimmy’s	What was Jay Stringer in charge of?	Why did Annemarie have a special diet?	How did Miranda help Alice Evens?
	Answer: Sal	Answer: Colin	Answer: Head of the Main Street Planning Board	Answer: She has epilepsy	Answer: Became her Bathroom buddy
<b>The Letters</b>	Where did Miranda find the first note?	What was Miranda counting when she found the second note?	What was the first sentence in the third letter Miranda got?	Where did Miranda find the fourth letter?	Who writes Miranda the Letters?
	Answer: In her library book	Answer: Jimmy’s daily bread delivery	Answer: You will want proof	Answer: In the shoe, by the mailbox	Answer: Crazy /Laughing Man/Kicker/ Marcus
<b>Mom and Richard</b>	What game show does Miranda’s mom go on?	What skill does Richard teach Miranda	What is Miranda’s mom’s job?	What does Miranda’s mom bring to the pregnant women in jail?	Name two of the things on mom wish list, if she wins on the game show:
	Answer: The \$20,000 Pyramid	Answer: Tying knots	Answer: Paralegal	Answer: Chips/Animal Cookies (from Sal’s mom, leftovers from the nursing home)	Answer: Trip to China Good Camera for Trip to China Wall to Wall carpeting for Miranda’s room New TV
<b>Random</b>	What is Jimmy’s special way of cutting the sandwich rolls?	Where did Miranda and her mom find the spear key?	What is in Jimmy’s Fred Flintstone piggy bank	What was the theme of Miranda’s Mysteries of Science Poster	What topic do Marcus, Julia and Miranda enjoy talking and thinking about?
	Answer: V-Cut	Answer: Nozzle of the fire hose	Answer: Folded up \$2 bills	Answer: Why Do We Yawn?	Answer: Time Travel
<b>Final Question</b>	What is the book Miranda reads over and over? Clue: She talks to Belle and Marcus about it, and Julia has a copy too. Answer: A Wrinkle in Time				