



SELF-AWARENESS

Week 2 – Younger Group

This week, have your students work on **recognizing and understanding** different **feelings** – those belonging to themselves, and those belonging to others. In understanding what is happening internally, the student is halfway to appropriately utilizing empathy.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ Continue to establish a “safe space” within the classroom, as well as the “personal bubble”
- ❖ Teach children other ways of describing their emotions
 - **Use frustrating moments in games to teach the word “frustration.”** Talk about how parents act when they are running late – this is “stressed.” What about the feeling they feel when they don’t have anything to do? This is boredom.
 - Make a deliberate effort to use and teach these words...giving students words gives students agency – control, & power.
 - It is nearly impossible to be self-aware if you have only the words happy, sad, and mad to describe yourself.
- ❖ **Self-awareness games usually pivot on observation and actively expressing emotion** in the form of dance or expressions. Younger groups benefit from games which establish an awareness of their physicality. Potential debrief questions include “How did you know he was happy when you helped him? How did you know you were happy when someone helped you?” Etc.
- ❖ **In terms of Imagineering – explore the connection of shapes and colors to certain moods...**red pictures are angry, blue sad – but how does each of the students express happiness? The activity is effective as a warm-up or cool-down, and impactful regardless of what game follows.
- ❖ **EMPATHY:** This week, have students actively empathize with how others’ emotions impact actions.
 - For example, read *Alexander and the [...] very Bad Day*, and ask how students should treat Alexander, and how students want to be treated if in a similar mood.

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“If I can understand myself, I can understand others. If I can understand others, then I can help others. When I help others, I am a hero.”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

When we think about impressing upon our students the importance of awareness – of not just themselves, but of one another – we can connect to the larger idea of mindfulness in general. Continue to use growth mindset friendly language, and introduce your students to the idea of their own potential. Being aware of one’s power is a type of self-awareness.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- As a teacher and a leader, *you* must remember to show respect unconditionally to your students. **#Trust**
- Use debrief questions to prod students into verbalizing (or drawing, acting, etc.) how respect feels when they receive it.
- This early in the semester, continually have students explain the importance of respect.

SELF-AWARENESS POWER WORDS:

Perspective

Potential

Leader

Reflection

Patience

Self-control

Emotions

Impulses



SELF-AWARENESS

Week 2 – Older Group

This week, have your students work on **recognizing and understanding** different **feelings** – those belonging to themselves, and those belonging to others. In understanding what is happening internally, the student is halfway to appropriately utilizing empathy.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ Continue to establish a “safe space” within the classroom, like the younger group, talk about personal space as well – but this should not be new to this age group.
- ❖ Self-awareness for this age group pivots on developing the student’s understanding of themselves. **How does feeling “mad” or “sad” impact your actions?** How do these actions impact others?
- ❖ Please introduce the idea of growth mindset this week if possible...it is integral your students understand the concept of the mind as a muscle as soon as possible. This makes self-esteem development easier throughout the semester.
- ❖ Self-awareness games often focus on observation. Games that involve charades-esque aspects are excellent choices this week...and can be dissected with questions like “How did you know what he meant? How did it feel when your team did not understand you? Describe a time this has happened in real life – do people always understand why you are sad or angry? What could you do to help them in real life like that you couldn’t do in this game? (The final answer is **talk** to others.)
- ❖ It is OKAY to have weaknesses. Older students oftentimes do not understand this, and they bury themselves in what they perceive their limitations to be.
 - The best way to get others to admit shortcomings is to admit your own. It can be anything from “Sometimes I have trouble making appointments on time” to “I don’t always listen to others” to “Sometimes my temper gets the better of me.” **#Own Up**

GUIDING STATEMENT:

*“I am capable of improving. **The mind is a muscle. I can make my mind stronger by using it constantly** – growth is always possible.”*

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

The mind is a muscle. Are people born Olympians and star athletes? *No.* They get there through years of practice. The mind works the same way. With younger students, you want them to be aware that their power exists – with the older students, you should focus on the positive and negative force they are capable of bringing into theirs and others’ lives. Knowing you *are* powerful is integral to true self-awareness.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- In older groups especially, it is important to separate disruptive students from the group to speak to them. **#Empathy**
- Potential question: What if a stranger insulted your art project? It would impact you – even if you don’t know them. You’re equally powerful.
- Students. Names. Learn them, or call them friends. **#Call them friends, #Each and Every**

SELF-AWARENESS POWER WORDS:

Perspective

Potential

Leader

Mind is Muscle

Reflection`

Self-control

Emotion

Impulses



CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES

Week 3 – Younger Group

Consider this section part one of two weeks this semester which focus on **Backbone Theme #2: The Power of Empowerment**. This week seeks to have students understand that diversity is a strength – you must encourage your students to love what makes each unique.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ This is an excellent week for books. *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day*, *The Sneetches*, *Little Blue and Little Yellow*, and *The Day the Crayons Quit* are all excellent choices for this age group.
- ❖ For the youngest of our students, it is possible the idea of being different from their peers is quite alien. No worries – **Celebrating Differences can be spun as a celebration of creativity.**
- ❖ Consider Imagineering for programming this week – something that necessitates unique creations.
 - Students will be frustrated if they are not able to create something “perfect” – use *this to your advantage*. Be emphatic in your declaration that art is unique,
 - Remember, young Dr. Seuss was reprimanded in art class for drawing his flower pot upset down. **#Knowledge is Power**
 - Another suggestion is to pursue a group project which becomes more beautiful with more contributions. Would rainbows be rainbows if they were all one color?
- ❖ Alternatively, choose games which benefit from an influx of different ideas and perspectives. This is more difficult to do with younger groups however.
- ❖ Differences are strengths. Diversity has only ever helped us.

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“I am not the same as you, and you are different from me. We are stronger when we respect our differences and learn from each other.”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

Hooray for Diffendoofer Day is great for students on the mature side of our younger groups. It focuses on a school that is zany and unpredictable, and touts their unique approach to education as a strength that separates their school from the boring school up the road, where everyone does everything the same. Diversity helps us. In doing things uniquely, we may fail...but in exchange, our successes will be true successes.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Be emphatic in your encouragement to students...respect their work, frustrations, and perspective. **#Empathy**
- Draw something “bad” yourself – it does not matter to you, but could matter a lot to a struggling student.
- Self-respect is the implicit idea behind *Celebrating Differences*. Do not let students be disrespectful to themselves or others.

CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES POWER WORDS:

Creativity

Potential

Diversity

Unique

Learn from Others

It's OK to Mess Up

Self-Respect

Patience



CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES

Week 3 – Older Group

Like our younger students, this week's theme focuses on **Backbone Theme #2: The Power of Empowerment**. Be sure to reference Backbone Themes in general throughout the semester, as they contain ways to help you grow as an educator.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ Again, this is an excellent week for books. Consider *The Sneetches*, *Ish*, or *A Perfectly Messed-Up Story*. (Some of these should be abridged...do not abridge while reading)
- ❖ Set the stage for Conflict Resolution by keeping pointing out how differences cause unnecessary conflict. Use *Mr. Lincoln's Way* to demonstrate how intolerance hurts everyone, including bullies.
- ❖ According to Erik Erikson, self-esteem is the name of this developmental age group.
 - Erikson's psychosocial crisis for children aged 5 to 12 concerns that of Industry v. Inferiority. **#Knowledge is Power** [For you]
 - The corresponding virtue is that of competence. This means, theoretically, if children don't have the opportunity to be truly competent in this time of their life, they will struggle with it for decades forward.
 - Do not underestimate the power of your encouragement. **Remember, self-slams are absolutely unacceptable**. Always intervene. **#Each and Every**
- ❖ Peer pressure is an underlying issue when it comes to celebrating differences. It is difficult to stand up to our friends – but it is necessary. Impress upon them the importance of thinking and judging others without influence from others.
 - This sets the foundation for the themes of *Community* and *Leadership* later on.

GUIDING STATEMENT:

"Diversity always makes us stronger. We learn the most from those who are not like ourselves."

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

Children can be incredibly cruel. Challenge students to examine their thoughts – make it a question of strength and determination. It is easy to be intolerant, impatient, and hateful. It takes strength to believe in yourself and others, and to learn about what you do not understand. You should believe your students are strong enough to overcome cruelty – or at least, they should believe you believe. **#Trust**

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- It is all right for students to approach the topic of race here, if it is approached respectfully.
- Why do we disrespect those different ourselves? The answer is fear. There is nothing to fear – the sooner we understand that, the easier unconditional respect becomes.
- Historical figures used unconditional respect to complete great strides – namely, Martin Luther King Jr. **#Knowledge is Power**

CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES POWER WORDS:

Peer Pressure

Assumptions

Stereotypes

Self-Respect

Thinking for One's Self

Diversity

Learning from Others



COMMUNITY

Week 4 – Younger Group

This week focus on having students **understand exactly what a community is, what communities look like, and why communities are important.** Play off of last week’s theme, and continue to discuss what makes us different – and why our differences do not preclude friendship.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ Consider that a (healthy) community is a **fostering environment that encourages growth while providing security.** For younger groups, try comparing it to a **living home.**
 - A home keeps you safe, and a home is made up of many different parts (people). You contribute to a home, and the home contributes to your life.
 - **A community is like a home without a house.** Contrasting the idea of a “home” and a “house” can work as an analogy for some students. Mature younger kids may be able to answer the question “What is the difference between a ‘home’ and a ‘house’?”
- ❖ Use last week’s subject matter – Celebrating Differences – to highlight why different communities exist...we live in different neighborhoods, go to different churches and schools, play in different sports teams – all of these aspects of a child’s life could potentially be considered a community.
- ❖ Stress that you would like your Peace through Play group to feel like a community. This means – no matter what is going on outside programming – students leave it aside until programming is over.
- ❖ If the concept of community seems adequately cemented in your students’ mind, the second prong of this week’s message involves the power of diversity.
 - Consider reading the book *Stone Soup* – the delicious stew was created because **everyone** in the town **was willing to contribute to the idea of something better.**

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“We are diverse and unique. We belong to many different communities. But we are still friends.”

DWEEK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

This week, combine the ideas of diversity and community. Many metaphors have been used, but for younger groups, trying comparing the mind to a garden...do they prefer gardens of only one kind of flower? Think of creating communities with individuals different from yourself as exposing your garden to new seeds. Remember, we *should* be talking about the mind and brain with students, even young ones. Rephrase, but do not fear the subject.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Communities cannot function without respect. Use hypothetical situations to lead students to this conclusion.
- What would happen if you, the coordinator, spent all of PtP programming on your phone? Using all the supplies for yourself?
- Use humor and play-acting to demonstrate disrespectful behavior, having them know the word “disrespect is powerful as well.

COMMUNITY POWER WORDS:

Communities

Diversity

Friendship

Differences

Open-mind

Working Together

Mind Garden



COMMUNITY

Week 4 – Older Group

Community is not too difficult a concept to grasp for this age. To open up the conversation and range of potential activities, discuss the more complicated idea of identity – as in, “my identity as a student, as a sister, as a peacemaker, etc.” – and **how this identity changes from one community to another.**

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ The definition of community for older students is the same as provided for younger groups. That is, community is a **fostering environment that encourages growth while providing security.**
 - Although you are encouraged to use the “house” versus “home” leading question with this age group as well, do not be afraid of rerouting the conversation toward something more complex.
- ❖ Community is a difficult topic to cover with only games. To avoid turning this week in a week about team work, it is highly suggested you Imagineer or read a book as part of the programming.
- ❖ The positive aspects of community are clear – but what about the other side? What happens when a community is toxic, controlling, and fear-inducing?
 - Talk about independence, and remembering what is right regardless of the individuals around you. Sometimes, communities can become so comfortable that they limit the group itself.
 - Depending on how comfortable you are with the group’s maturity level, use historical examples to bring the reality of toxic communities to light. For example, **the recent violence in Charlottesville – the extremist groups there are so unexposed to the rest of the country, that they legitimately believe what they say they believe.**
 - Communities which actively exclude others are not acting in the student’s best interest. The student doesn’t have to leave the community – but what they *must* do is remember that what the community believes should never control what the individual believes.

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“I belong to many communities. So do my friends. We do not have to belong to the same communities to understand and respect one another.”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

It makes sense to be wary of those who are different than yourself. Don’t tell students they shouldn’t feel what they feel – instead, stress their ability to rise above their discomfort. Highlight the importance of *growing* your mind – consider this, when you were a baby, how was your coordination? How did it improve? And how can we do the equivalent for your mind? **We must actively challenge our beliefs and assumptions.**

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Respecting things you don’t understand can be difficult – but this is why it is crucial.
- What does the individual, or community, gain in disrespecting another community? A false feeling of superiority. Tell your students they are too strong to need that.
- The US is often referred to as a stew (*not* a melting pot...that implies assimilation) – in that the flavor of the country becomes stronger with the influx of diversity we are lucky enough to be exposed to.

COMMUNITY POWER WORDS:

Communities

Diversity

Leader

Learning from Others

Independence

Identity

House v. Home

Peer Pressure



LEADERSHIP

Week 5 – Younger Group

Good leaders are heroes. Ideally, you will already have impressed this idea upon your students – but either way, this is the week to really bring the message home.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ The book *The Berenstain Bears are Superbears!* is surprisingly effective at connecting successful leadership to being a superhero. It is highly recommended for younger groups.
- ❖ If the first part of this week's theme concerns connecting leadership to the idea of being a hero, the second part concerns the idea that good leaders are not inherently authority figures, and vice versa.
 - If you stand up for someone in need, you are acting like a hero – you are being a leader. If you stand up to your friends, even though it is difficult, you are acting like a hero – you are being a leader. ***If you help someone in need, if you take responsibility for your mistakes, if you are willing to be creative...all of this is heroic, all of this is what leadership involves.***
 - You don't need superpowers to be powerful. You just have to be willing and brave.
- ❖ Younger students love discussing individuals from their own lives they consider to be heroes and leaders. Encourage this in an Imagineering activity.
- ❖ Leadership is connected closely to teamwork. Navigate the difference between these concepts in game debriefs. Consider a team Imagineering activity where there is one leader, then no leaders.
 - Do all teams need leaders? What would happen without leaders?

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“Good leaders are heroes. I can learn from leaders, and I can be a leader.”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

In Peace through Play, you and your volunteers are leaders for your students – even if they don't show you any respect. Remember this, if you are ever tempted to argue with a six year old. Also remember that younger students are flattered to pieces at the opportunity to act as a leader – use this to the group's advantage setting and cleaning up activities. Having students act in the role of a leader helps them visualize themselves as powerful and capable of leading.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Ask about other qualities superheroes have...for instance, ***did a spider bite make Spiderman kind and committed to good?*** (No...that was already in him...just like it is already in your students.)
- How well do disrespectful leaders lead? Why is this? Why do we listen to those who treat us with respect, and not those who do not?
- What makes a good leader? How do you know good leaders are respectful/what does their respect look like?

LEADERSHIP POWER WORDS:

Peacemaker

Integrity

Leader

Listening

Hero

Stepping-up

Empathy

Patience



LEADERSHIP

Week 5 – Older Group

With older students, the idea of leadership has likely been rehashed with them over and over again. That said, focus on bringing leadership closer to your students – make it more graspable and attainable, and **equate stepping-up as a leader as a form of strength and courage.**

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ Leadership and peacemaking go hand in hand. Possible quotation to share with older students:
“*[Anyone] can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius – and a lot of courage – to move in the opposite direction.*” –E.F. Schumacher **#Knowledge is Power**
- ❖ Consider *Yertle the Turtle* for this age group. Yertle is an example of an authority and a bad leader.
 - You don’t need superpowers to be superpowerful. In *Yertle the Turtle*, Mack causes Yertle’s kingdom of stacked turtles to fall simply by burping. More importantly though, Mack never stopped challenging Yertle’s leadership.
 - Impress upon older students the idea that they you don’t have to be hired to be a leader – it is about what you do, and how you do it.
 - The best leaders listen to those they lead.
- ❖ Play games in which students are put in and out of leadership roles –
 - Debrief how they performed when they were supported by others, and when they were not.
 - Another spin for games involve observational games...oftentimes, we are leaders and examples to others, without even knowing it. We are powerful whether we want to be or not.
- ❖ Bad leaders forget what it is like to be among the led.
 - This is another opportunity to introduce the concept of empathy – the pinnacle of human connection.

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“I am powerful, and I can lead. When I stand up for my beliefs, for those in need, and for myself – I am leading.”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

It is easier to respect others when they respect you. But sometimes, people aren’t going to respect you immediately – even if they should. Although it is difficult, you should still treat them with respect. Be a leader, do what’s hard. Maybe you’ll help the person grow. This is the hardest message for our oldest students to understand – **we have to respect the disrespectful.** This is hard. If it was easy, everyone would already do it.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Is being a leader always fun? Can you be a good leader while being disrespectful?
- If you mess up as a leader, what should you do? What are some mistakes leaders make?
- You respect yourself when you respect those who don’t respect you – because **in respecting the disrespectful, you are refusing to let others behaviors compromise your integrity.**

LEADERSHIP POWER WORDS:

Open-mind

Potential

Leader

Peacemaker

Hero

Integrity

Patience

Learning from Others



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Week 6 – Younger Group

Conflict resolution is trickier with this age group – try starting from the vantage point of **understanding what each of those words means**, and why **we should try to pursue resolution in the face of conflict**.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ Begin by gauging how your students understand conflict. **Try using tangible examples relatable to their lives** – like what happens when two friends want to play with the same toy, or the same equipment (the swing set), or when there’s one candy bar left, but two people who deserve it – etc.
- ❖ Impress upon your students **the value of being able to listen**. Listening can solve conflict.
 - This is difficult, because you want so much to see and hear what you already want to be true... in *Yertle the Turtle*, **he wanted to see the whole world, and in wanting that, he couldn’t see what was right in front of him**.
 - On a less theoretical note, in *The Zax*, the Zax are too stubborn to see past their desire to beat the other...and in the end, they both lost. (Though, they may not ever have known it.)
 - Zax question – did it matter, in the end, who went which way? Did the world care? Should they have cared? (Answer...no. The world definitely didn’t care.)
- ❖ This is THE week for Freeze debriefs, and the like. **Take every opportunity to use conflict to your advantage**. It’s also a great week for skits and comics.
- ❖ *The Zax* is truly an exemplary story for *Conflict Resolution*...it is short, sweet, humorous, and rhyming. And students can relate to the stand-off the Zax characters introduce.
 - Ask students about avoiding Zax moments...or about times they were in Zax moments. Alternatively, fabricate a conflict involving you and a volunteer – **so students can see absurd conflict in action**.

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“Peace is harder. But Peace is better.”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

Make sure your students understand **that peace is a choice that takes strength**. Choosing Peace flexes your peacemaking skills – like all muscles, it will be tough at first. But with practice, it gets easier. Mastering anger is a skill which students should be encouraged to explore – it is not wrong to be angry, but you get farther if you master your anger.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Don’t be afraid to be wrong. Respect your students, and always be up front with your mistakes. **#Own Up, #Trust**
- Self-respect is not just self-flattery. To truly respect yourself, you have to be comfortable and aware of your shortcomings.
- Have your volunteers be constantly debriefing programming throughout the semester.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POWER WORDS:

Peacemaker

Letting Go

Taking the High Road

Pick your Battles

Stubbornness

Strength

Patience



CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Week 6 – Older Group

With older students, use the tenets of respect – **humility, credibility, unconditionality** – to create a strong platform for promoting both the **importance** and **attainability** of resolution. **Peace is possible.**

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ Gauge how/if your students understand the importance of conflict-resolution. Consider speaking of Civil Rights leaders: individuals who used respect and patience to achieve resolution.
- ❖ Consider petty disputes, like the kind seen in *The Zax* or *The Butter Battle Book* – in these cases, humility and a willingness to ‘let go’ would have achieved resolution and peace.
- ❖ *Golden Conflict Resolution advice*: Look beyond your perspective. Try to *understand* the other person – if you cannot understand their sentiment, at least try to **recognize the sincerity of their position and emotions**. Consider the following examples for your students:
 - Maybe you don’t agree with your guardians decision to send you to bed at 9 pm – you are entitled to that opinion. However, surely you can also understand what your guardians are thinking – even if you don’t think they are right, you can still understand that they genuinely think they are right. **Validating the existence of another’s opinion paves the way to resolution.**
 - Empathy explanation: try asking whether or not we should be nice to dogs. After our non-sociopathic students vehemently agree that yes, we should indeed be kind to animals – ask why.
- ❖ What does it mean to win? If a game goes *really* wrong – consider bringing up this question: Which is more important, an individual winning – or everyone moving on to something better?
 - Even a simple game like chain tag can be extrapolated as an analogy to how meanness (and kindness) can gain momentum – if someone is willing to put forth the first step.
- ❖ *Books! Comics! Skits! Flash Debriefs!* **Use conflict to your advantage this week.**

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“Meanness spreads. Conflict spreads. But kindness and empathy spreads too. **YOU choose what you spread. In this way, we are ALL powerful.**”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

Teach the word **credibility**. Can students who call others names be taken seriously when they complain about being called a name? Students understand this, so give it a word. #Knowledge is Power. Other growth advice for this week’s theme: **A conflict ignored is NOT a conflict resolved...deal with your failures by facing them.** This, of course, applies to you as well.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- **Focus on the subtlety and peace of MLK’s and Rosa Parks’ actions** – both were peaceful, both were respectful – even to people who were horrible to them. This was not easy to do.
- If you believe in the ‘Golden Rule’ – you must follow it **unconditionally**. If treating everyone with respect was easy, we would all already be doing it. Truly admirable respect takes strength, patience, and humility.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION POWER WORDS:

Empathy

Accountability

Letting Go

Humility

Stubbornness

Accepting Responsibility

Patience

Strength



EMBRACING POTENTIAL

Week 7 – Younger Group

This week's theme is all about emphasizing each student's ability to succeed. **No, we can't all be astronauts. But we can all flourish.** There are many beautiful ways to explore this empowering truth with our younger group.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ As a reminder, empowerment is **emphatic, unconditional support**. Remember to always keep empowerment and growth mindset in mind when interacting with students. **#Each and Every**
- ❖ There are several excellent books to explore this week. *Leo the Late Bloomer*, *Ish*, *Harold and the Purple Crayon*, and *Amazing Grace* are all geared toward this age group.
 - *Leo the Late Bloomer* gives students the opportunity to connect with a character who can't seem to do anything right – someone behind everyone else. Leo gets there in the end, and in the end, that's all that mattered.
- ❖ **Remember – your (the coordinator and volunteers) voice is incredibly powerful. Make sure your students believe that you believe in them.**
- ❖ If initiating gaming programming, look for games that unveil the power of the individual student. This is much easier to do with books and Imagineering however – remember it is okay to use games as a warm-up or a cooldown.
- ❖ There is almost an infinite amount of Imagineering possibilities here. Focus on activities which let students create a visual representation of their potential. Think seeds, icebergs, horizons, etc.
- ❖ Teach the word “potential” – or at least try. Once learned, students can understand growth mindset friendly encouragement like “Don't give up! You and I both know you have so much potential!”.

GUIDING STATEMENT:

“I will not give up. I will not give up on myself. I will not let others give up on me.”

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

What is the potential of a seed? Anything from a redwood tree, to a beautiful flower, to a delicious fruit. Show seeds to your students – do the seeds look like much right now? Of course not. They've not grown yet. Emphasize that each of the students is like a unknown seed – there is no way of knowing how great they can become until after being properly cared for and grown. Consider a craft decorating giant seed cut-outs.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Students who do not try are not respecting their potential as a person.
- Please refer back to the Backbone Theme sheet on Empowerment – you should be constantly empowering your students.
- Don't be discouraged by low self-esteems. Respect your students, and believe that they have the power to succeed if given the tools. **#Serve don't Save**

EMBRACING POTENTIAL POWER WORDS:

Obstacle

Potential

Respect

Patience

Empower

Perserverance

Confidence

Determination



EMBRACING POTENTIAL

Week 7 – Older Group

This week, take the theme where your students most need it to go. If your programming group is insecure, focus on that. If your programming group puts one another down – by all means, focus on that instead. Refer to the empowerment sheet for additional guidelines.

SUGGESTED GOALS

- ❖ *Thank You, Mr. Falker* is a superb book for this age group. Patricia Polacco – the author and illustrator – could not read until she was 14. She thought she was stupid. Of course, she certainly wasn't, and is now a celebrated author and illustrator.
- ❖ Remember, you want students to understand their ability to impact themselves, *and* their ability to impact others. In other words – **remind your students that their encouragement matters too.**
- ❖ There will always be factors which work against a students' belief in themselves.
 - In the book *Ish*, the protagonist struggles to create art after his brother insults it.
 - Consider using *Finding Winnie* to demonstrate the profound impact one act of kindness can cause on the rest of the world.
- ❖ Sometimes students develop an "If you win, I lose" attitude...part of embracing potential is embracing the potential of others as well, and celebrating it. In Dr. Seuss' *The Brag* – the two main characters are absurdly obsessed with outdoing the other. Emphasize that only the insecure need others to fail in order to feel they have succeeded.
- ❖ With great power comes great responsibility. If you are someone of great confidence, someone people look to – you are capable of both helping and harming our world.
 - This is similar to the superhero/supervillain analogy in the Backbone Themes

GUIDING STATEMENT:

"No matter what happens, no matter what anyone says, I am important. We are all important. We can all grow to do great things."

DWECK CHECK

Growth Mindset Connection

Potential can be approached from the perspective of understanding and appreciating our shortcomings. Obstacles and failures make us stronger – but only if we use them as an opportunity to grow, and not let them shut down our dreams. Our entire person is engineered toward growth – our minds are constantly learning. Let us celebrate this mutual possession of strength, rather than dismay at our individual imperfections.

SPOTLIGHT THEME RESPECT:

- Respect your students by not wasting their time – make sure they *always* have something to do. **#Never Ever**
- Your students are important. Your students' stories are important. **Listen to your students. #Trust**
- "If you judge a **fish** by its **ability to climb a tree**, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."
--Albert Einstein **#Knowledge is Power**

EMBRACING POTENTIAL POWER WORDS:

Empowerment

Potential

Obstacle

Determination

Patience

Confidence

Self-Esteem

Perserverance