

STRENGTHS EXPLORER®

EDUCATOR
PLAYBOOK



GALLUP®

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What Is StrengthsExplorer®?

Fast forward to a world where every person knows exactly what his or her greatest talents and strengths are and uses them every day to be his or her best self. The challenge in getting to this future world is that focusing on what's wrong with people and trying to "fix" their weaknesses seems to be the general societal norm. Imagine what would happen if instead of focusing on what's wrong with a person, we were to focus on what is right about him or her and help that person develop strategies for using the natural talents he or she already possesses.

Gallup has spent decades researching what is right with people and identifying the unique strengths they possess. As a result, Gallup has helped organizations worldwide develop more productive employees. The results of studying the best performers in hundreds of different roles helped lead to the creation of the StrengthsExplorer assessment, which is an instrument specifically designed to **aid students in discovering and developing their unique strengths** to become their best selves.

Why StrengthsExplorer®?

Great teachers appreciate just how unique every student is. The more we can understand each student's uniqueness, the better prepared we can be to help students find their own path to success and achieve higher levels of hope, engagement, and well-being throughout their lives. The StrengthsExplorer helps students identify and name that uniqueness through the lens of a strengths model that provides a common language with a targeted approach of focusing on what is right rather than what is wrong. For students, learning about how their talents and strengths affect their performance is knowledge that they can transfer to much of what they want to accomplish in the future.



How Do I Use This StrengthsExplorer® Educator Playbook?

The StrengthsExplorer is designed to help students apply their strengths and put them into action. One of the greatest motivations for creating this assessment was the power of having a common shared language of strengths. Maybe for the first time your students will have positive words to describe their natural patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior that give them the most energy and create their greatest potential for success. That is why we want students to begin **applying their strengths toward a meaningful goal** as soon as they can.

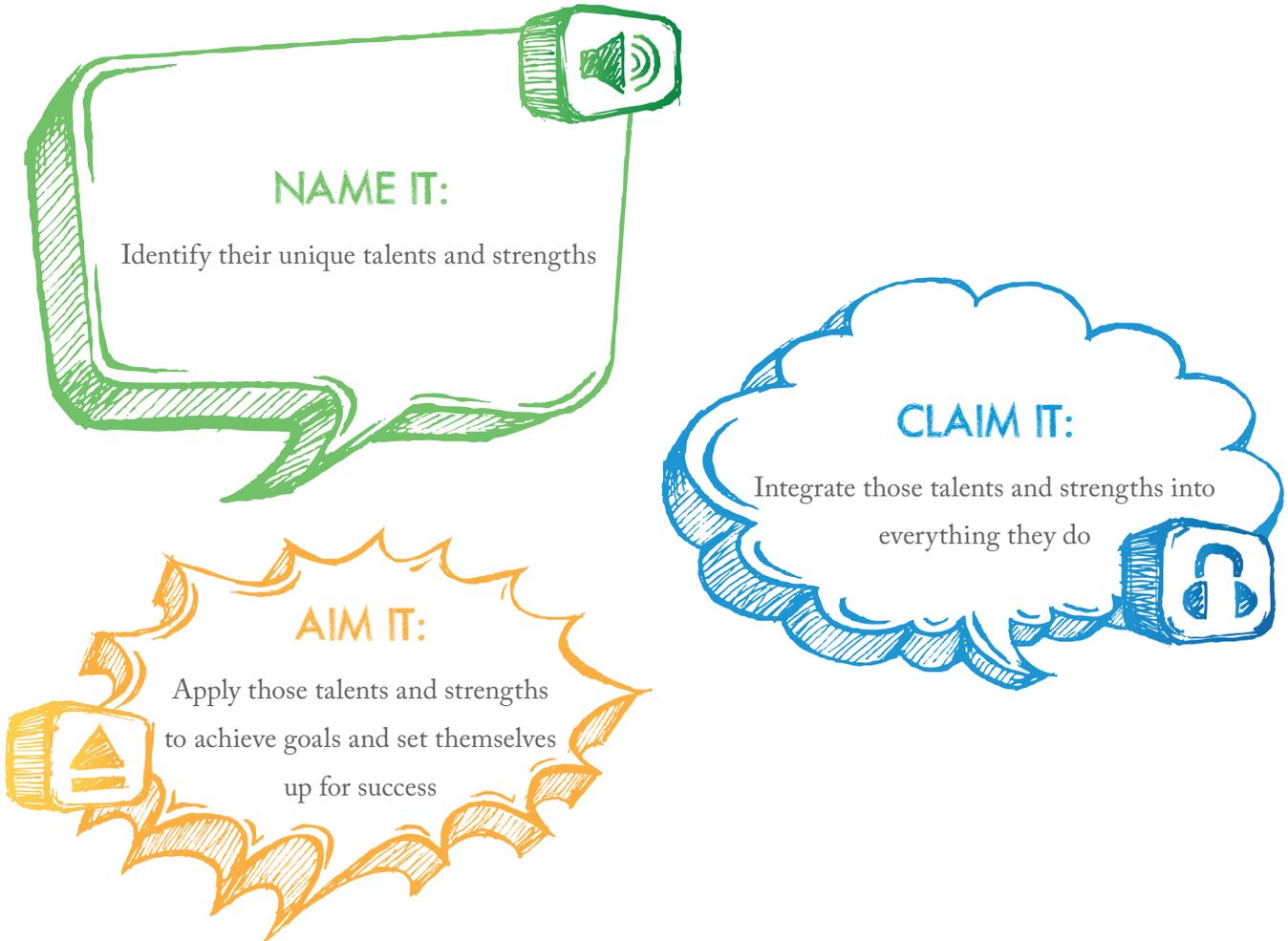
This starts with you.

This StrengthsExplorer Educator Playbook contains descriptions of several activities that you can use to help your students:

- understand and affirm their strengths
- develop knowledge of their strengths in the context of how they have used them in the past
- apply their strengths toward the goals they set for themselves in the future



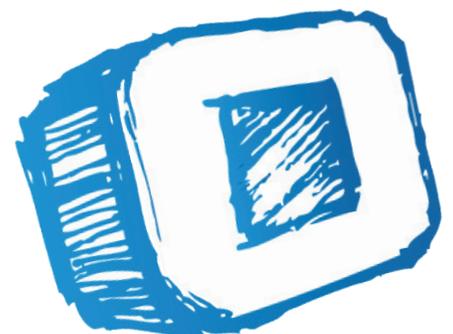
Let this guide provide you with a plan to unleash the strengths within your students by helping them:



This StrengthsExplorer Educator Playbook gives you suggestions on how to facilitate targeted conversations with your students based on the activities and information provided in the StrengthsExplorer Student Playbook. The Student Playbook introduces the concept of strengths development and helps students engage in three distinct ways, by:

- developing an understanding of their unique talents and strengths
- identifying a competency for sharing their strengths with others
- using and applying their strengths in a productive way

Take time to familiarize yourself with the StrengthsExplorer Student Playbook and learn ways you can use the activities to complement and reinforce the concepts found within.



The key to enabling students to use their strengths to create positive outcomes is for them to participate in ongoing strengths development over time. While having a clear strengths identification is the first step, students must revisit their strengths in a variety of circumstances over an extended period of time for maximum impact. Real change and genuine impact happen when an individual not only identifies his or her strengths and talents but also invests time and effort into developing skills and knowledge while applying those strengths to achieve a personal, meaningful goal.

Strengths-Building Equation



Play-by-Play Activity Guide

Use the step-by-step activities found in this Educator Playbook to bring the power of strengths development to any program or curriculum.

The Educator Playbook is divided into five sections:

- | | | | |
|----------|---|--|--------------------|
| 1 | Understanding Strengths Explorer | Provide students with language designed to highlight their strengths. | Pages 6-21 |
| 2 | Name It | Help students affirm and understand their natural talents and strengths. | Pages 22-28 |
| 3 | Claim It | Connect students' past successes to their strengths and help set them up for future successes. | Pages 29-38 |
| 4 | Aim It | Provide students with practical applications of their strengths. | Pages 39-41 |
| 5 | Appendix | Use these printable tools to aid in students' strengths development. | Pages 42-45 |



Take the StrengthsExplorer® Assessment

Supporting Resources:

StrengthsExplorer Theme Description Snapshot

StrengthsExplorer Long Theme Definitions and Action Items

Strengths Theme Map

This assessment is different from any other test your students have taken. Unlike most tests that are designed to identify what you don't know or can't do, the StrengthsExplorer assessment highlights a student's potential strengths with language designed to affirm and encourage his or her development. The online assessment will take about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Upon completion, students will receive a StrengthsExplorer report containing an in-depth description of their top three strengths themes, along with action items to help apply those top themes. The report also includes a set of adult action items with suggestions to help parents encourage and affirm the strengths of their child.



StrengthsExplorer® Theme Descriptions Snapshot

Achieving

Students especially talented in the Achieving theme like to accomplish things and have a great deal of energy.

Caring

Students especially talented in the Caring theme enjoy helping others.

Competing

Students especially talented in the Competing theme enjoy measuring their performance against that of others and have a great desire to win.

Confidence

Students especially talented in the Confidence theme believe in themselves and their ability to be successful in their endeavors.

Dependability

Students especially talented in the Dependability theme keep their promises and show a high level of responsibility.

Discoverer

Students especially talented in the Discoverer theme tend to be very curious and like to ask “Why?” and “How?”

Future Thinker

Students especially talented in the Future Thinker theme tend to think about what’s possible beyond the present time, even beyond their lifetime.

Organizer

Students especially talented in the Organizer theme are good at scheduling, planning, and organizing.

Presence

Students especially talented in the Presence theme like to tell stories and be at the center of attention.

Relating

Students especially talented in the Relating theme are good at establishing meaningful friendships and maintaining them.

Achieving

You have more energy and more goals than other people. You love a sense of accomplishment.

You are in a hurry to get started and make things happen because you almost always have a list in your mind of the things you want to get done. It is fun to achieve small goals and even more exciting to achieve big goals that challenge you. The more you get done, the more you feel like a successful person. And the more successes you have, the more you want to have. Finishing a project feels good to you because you love a sense of accomplishment. An award, a good grade, or praise can mean a lot to you because it feels good when your effort and ability are noticed. Because you are a hard worker, you always feel that you could and should be doing more.

ACTION ITEMS

People might tell you that you are a “self-starter” because you are always working at something. Look at the things you want to do. Make a list, and decide what is most important. Then, do those things first.

Challenges are important to you. If every goal on your list is easy, it might not feel good. Set some big goals. Do you want to learn another language, score three goals in a game, write a song, or teach yourself to skateboard? Set some goals that will make you feel proud when you accomplish them.

You’re at your best when you are active and energetic. Find things to do that get you up and moving. Are there new things you can do to use your energy to achieve a goal? For example, you could get up early and create some free time for yourself to play your guitar, read, exercise, or study.

You can work harder and longer than most people. Try to be an example and a motivator to people who are working together on teams or big projects. Sometimes, just one very hard worker helps the whole group get more done.

What groups could you join to help others accomplish their goal? A volunteer group in your church or school might be a great place to use your hard-working talent toward important results.

ACHIEVING ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

Achievers have more energy than others. How does this person most like to or want to channel his or her energy? Are there some activities, projects, or responsibilities you could suggest?

At the end of the day, help this individual know his or her accomplishments. Point out those things you have noticed that this person has done. Ask what he or she did that day, and then listen to, appreciate, and recognize it.

How can you best showcase this person’s accomplishments? Find ways to display what he or she has done. This could be a wall of photos, a scrapbook, a portfolio, a refrigerator display, or a list of daily, weekly, or monthly achievements.



Caring

In your heart, helping other people is very important. You want to make the world better by helping people in small ways or big ways.

You have a big heart. You feel good when you reach out and help people. You are the friend who includes others. When someone feels left out, you help him or her be part of your group. It is easy for you to encourage people, share with them, and help them learn. You know you have something to offer other people. Even the smallest kind deed is important in people's everyday lives. Whether you help in big or small ways, you can make a difference in your world. People count on you to be kind, thoughtful, and caring.

ACTION ITEMS

Name three of your favorite ways to help people. Take a look around your world. How can you help someone this week? From your own ideas or the list below, choose one thing and do it this week. Could you help by:

- baby-sitting?
- visiting a neighbor?
- doing schoolwork with a friend?
- mowing a lawn or shoveling snow for an elderly person?
- walking a dog?
- collecting cans for recycling?
- welcoming a new kid at school?
- painting park benches?
- straightening up the classroom for your teacher?

When you notice that someone has been left out, invite that person to play or study or sit at your lunch table with you and your friends. You can help people feel welcome, included, and happy.

Can you help someone with schoolwork after yours is done? By sharing what you know, you can help others learn. Is there a student you could help each week? Take time to tell the person "Good job" when he or she does well. You'll both feel good.

Younger kids may look to you as a friend. Think of ways to teach them new things or ways to make them smile and help them have fun. They need bigger kids like you to care about them and show them why they are special.

How do you show your family that you care about them? Let your family know that you like being with them. Think about ways to spend time together, like playing games or riding bikes. Get their ideas about what is fun to do as a group. Thank them for the best times you have together.

CARING ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

"Catch" this person being helpful. Acknowledge and affirm his or her helpful actions. Tell this person how his or her caring talents make the world a better place for everyone. Honor the power of caring.

Talk with this person about how helping is part of your own daily life. Share formal and informal ways you help in the workplace, home, school, or community. These conversations will spark his or her thinking about everyday ways to help.

What are some classroom, school, club, community, or church projects that could use this person's Caring talents? How could this person actively help? Can you or another adult facilitate an opportunity to help? Brainstorm with him or her about these and other opportunities, including:

- tutoring another student
- being a kindergarten buddy
- volunteering at a nursing home
- helping to coach a younger sports team
- cleaning up a neighborhood park
- volunteering at the animal shelter
- taking part in a mitten, coat, or canned food drive
- raising funds for an international aid project



Competing

You see many things in life as a game, and you feel great joy when you win. You truly hate to lose because you are always striving for first place.

Every day you compete. Winning first place is your goal in any contest that you feel is worth your time. If there is no one to compete against, you compete against yourself to do more or accomplish a goal faster or better. You can be competing against someone else even when that person doesn't know it. Because you hate to lose, you might get angry, upset, or even cry. It does not matter if others think the contest is important. If you are doing it, you want to be number one. Others look to you for the motivation to win.

ACTION ITEMS

Winning is a good motivator. You have a built-in need to win. There are many ways you can use that at home, at school, and in your activities. If you play sports, it helps to practice skills over and over so that you'll be prepared to win. For schoolwork, how can you make studying into a game? If your club is having a fundraiser, suggest a contest to see who can raise the most money.

Find ways to win. Other people may give up when they don't see a way to win, but you keep thinking. Try different ways to win, and look for the easiest and fastest way. Maybe there is a shortcut that gets you to the goal sooner.

Measuring yourself helps you to keep going and do better. Working on your basketball shot? Count how many baskets you can make in a row. Learning to play a song? Count how many measures you can play without making a mistake. Think of ways to count what you are doing and you will find that measurement improves performance.

Competing with someone else can help you get better at what you want to do. Do you have some other friends who are competitive that you could challenge? Do you have a friend who is as good as or better than you at something you like to do? Find one of these friends and have a contest with him or her. Your friendly

competition will push each of you to be better and do your best.

Pick one thing you really want to do this week. Tell a parent, teacher, sister, or brother about it.

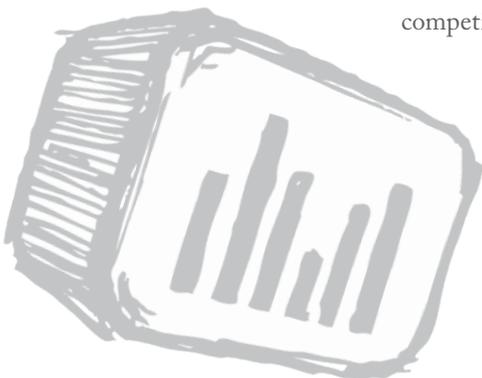
Have this person help you set a challenge for yourself. Can you learn your spelling words in two days? Can you dribble a soccer ball 35 times? Can you learn the names of five new people?

COMPETING ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

This person may express strong emotions, win or lose. Affirm the feelings — happy or mad — by listening to the emotion. You may need to help him or her work through it. Understand that this emotion gives the competitor fuel.

Arrange opportunities for this person to measure progress or success. Introduce the concept of “personal bests” by tracking this person's best performance, score, or achievement to date. This could be something large or could even be an everyday activity, like the most minutes practicing the clarinet or the most pages read in a week.

There are many different ways to compete. How can you set this person up for success? What arena suits this person best — sports, arts, academia, or clubs? Is this person a team or individual competitor? Who can you arrange for this person to compete against to help stretch his or her skills?



Confidence

You believe in yourself and what you can do. This helps you take on challenges because you feel sure you can succeed.

Because you are confident, you are able to do things that others may not want to try. Knowing that you are a unique and special person in the world gives you the power to be who you are. You don't have to be like everybody else, and you don't have to follow the crowd. Even when you don't feel it, other people may see you as brave because you will speak up even if no one else will. You are sure enough of your opinions that you will take a stand for them. It is great to believe in what you can do because this belief helps you do more in your life.

ACTION ITEMS

You are good at knowing your opinions and talking about them. When other people are unsure of the right actions to take, speak up for what you think is right. You can speak for others who are afraid to say how they feel.

You like to think big. Help your friends or groups think big too. They can do bigger and more important things with your encouragement. You can build their belief in what they can accomplish. Think big. Achieve big.

Think about a group in your school or community where you are interested in taking an active role. Your ability to be confident and move forward can help the group be more successful.

Talk to your counselor or favorite teacher about things you would like to learn in the future and goals you would like to accomplish. Pick out some classes or clubs that will help you do this. Use your confidence to keep trying new things.

You feel comfortable making your own path. Most times it is a successful one, but sometimes it might not be. When other people stop at a roadblock, you find another path. When you encounter a disappointment, think of ways you can try again or succeed at something else. Your belief in what you can do keeps you going now and in the future.

CONFIDENCE ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

How can you build on the accomplishments this individual has had? How can you help create more? Help set this person up for success. Are there things you know he or she could be successful at that haven't yet been explored? Think of the best ways to use his or her confidence when choosing activities.

Confidence can lead individuals into positive or adverse situations because they like to think big and achieve big. Help this person clarify exactly what he or she wants to achieve and how to go about it in the best possible way.

While confidence helps this person hang in there, come back from disappointments, and keep moving forward, be prepared to provide encouragement and support when needed. Appreciate his or her ability to maneuver through situations that many peers may not feel comfortable or confident enough to deal with.



Dependability

Trust is important to you, and you care about being seen as responsible and trustworthy. People count on you to do what you say you will do. When you make a promise, you mean to keep it. You like being chosen to be in charge of getting something done because you know it means others see you as dependable and trustworthy. Sometimes, being asked to do more is like getting a reward because it means people believe in you. Maybe you have special chores or responsibilities at home or at school. Whatever job you are given, you want to get it done. Some people might say you act older than other kids your age because you are so responsible. You can be a good example to other people. Earning the praise of teachers and parents for getting things done and doing what is right feels good to you. People count on you to do what you say you will do.

ACTION ITEMS

Until you get important things finished, you probably don't feel quite right. You should tell yourself "Good job" for getting schoolwork, chores, or calls to friends done without being told. Other people may need more reminders than you do. See how many things you can get done each day before you are reminded. Take pride in being able to say, "I already did it" when asked.

It's important to do what you say you will do. You like to keep your promises and you understand that keeping them builds trust. Before you make a promise, be sure it is one you want to keep and one you can keep. When people choose a friend or leader, they want to know that person can be trusted to do what he or she promised to do. Build a reputation that you are proud of.

You almost always know the right thing to do. If someone plans to do something that you don't think is right, don't go along with it. If a friend wants to do something that might get him or her in trouble or hurt someone's feelings, what could you say to help change his or her mind? Can you plan the right words to say in a hard situation? You can help your friends by being a good example and not going along with things that make you uncomfortable. You might be surprised that others are glad you spoke up.

Friends need someone to share their secrets with.

People trust you, so they may tell you things that they don't want others to know.

You prove that you deserve this trust by

keeping their secrets. But, if you think somebody else needs to know this secret, help the person be brave and do the right thing. Offer to go with your friend if you think he or she needs help telling someone.

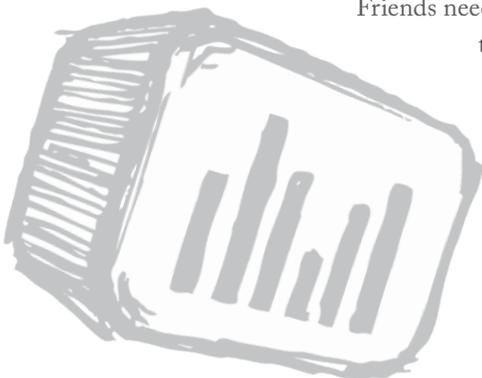
Are there some responsibilities you would like to have? Taking on more responsibility can help lots of other people. What is one new responsibility you could take on to help a teacher, parent, coach, or neighbor? Maybe this is a weekly job or is just something you volunteer to do once. Either way, you are helping someone. Some examples to start you thinking are:

- taking care of a pet
- baby-sitting
- building family or club scrapbooks
- mowing lawns or shoveling snow
- being a crossing guard
- raking leaves
- helping with lunch duty
- gardening
- cleaning up a park

DEPENDABILITY ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

To take responsibility, one first needs to take psychological ownership. Let this person make choices rather than assigning him or her tasks. What are the projects this person would be excited about owning? Help him or her generate ideas about new and meaningful opportunities for responsibility.

Recognize and point out ways you see this person taking more responsibility than others the same age. Let this individual know why you appreciate his or her hard work, dependability, and trustworthiness. Could he or she earn some sort of recognition for how this sense of responsibility makes a difference?



Trust this person with your ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Be aware that others share their ideas, thoughts, and feelings with him or her as well. Recognize Dependability talents by letting this person know that you are aware others count on him or her.



Discoverer

A thinker and learner, you are excited about exploring ideas and making connections. You like to ask the questions “How?” and “Why?”

Questions are in your mind a lot. How does that work? Why did that happen? How did someone figure that out? You are excited to explore new ideas and ask questions so you understand the “how” and “why” of the things you choose to learn. You collect and connect information and ideas. It is fun to be an expert, and when you find a subject or idea you like, you can spend a lot of time exploring it. You might be bored doing things the same way everyone else does because you like to find new ways. Talking with creative thinkers is fun because it sparks even more ideas. People can benefit from your information and ideas when you share them.

ACTION ITEMS

What would you like to research? Maybe you would like to choose one or two subjects that interest you a lot and try to become an expert on them. Could you know more than anyone else in your grade about something? Since you like to explore ideas on your own outside of school, try to earn credit for your research and have it help your grades.

You are good at figuring out how things work. Try to create a space of your own where you can take things apart and see how they're made, even if it's just a special “project box” you keep under your bed.

Find people who are interested in the same things as you. Start a conversation. You can teach each other what you know and learn to look at ideas in new and different ways. Together, you may discover more and more because your ideas connect and lead to new ones. Who else might like to join in?

The Internet is one place to explore ideas. Find someone who knows great Internet sites where kids can do research, and make a list. Share the list with teachers and friends, and add their favorites to it. They will appreciate it, and you will have a growing list of places you can learn about new ideas.

You like to know the reason why.

You like to get as much information and knowledge as you can before you kick off an activity.

Sometimes, others may have an idea and want to jump in and

get started. You can be the “voice of reason” in the group who helps them get the facts and learn more first.

DISCOVERER ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

Ask this person what he or she is working on, inside or outside the classroom. What is this person's favorite new idea of the week? What could you do to support his or her explorations?

Observe and ask how this person likes to learn. Use the information to keep the person asking “How?” and “Why?” Is there a place where he or she can spread out a project and not have to put it away? Is there a special place for the student to build, construct, read, or work on his or her own projects? Show interest in what this person is working on by watching, being inquisitive, or lending a “helping hand” when needed.

Sometimes interest in a subject is intense but short-lived. Start with a list of possible subjects to explore, but let the kids guide the topics and suggest new ones. For Discoverers, the thrill is in starting something new, so they may be ready to move on to the next exciting project rather than finish the old one. Position yourself as a fellow learner rather than as an expert, and let them become the experts. There are many ways to explore and learn. Using different approaches like reading, experimenting, construction, deconstruction, and field trips will integrate and deepen learning.



Future Thinker

Your mind loves to think and dream about the future. You are a person who thinks about what is possible, not what is impossible.

You like to imagine the life you will have, what new things will be invented, and what you will be able to do that you cannot do now. What kind of person will you be? How will the world be different in 10 years or 100 years? What are your dreams? Your visions of the future might be bigger than most people's because thinking big is one of your talents. You like to think about the important things in life, what they mean, and how they are connected to each other. Finding meaning is important to you. It is not enough for you to simply concentrate on what you need to do today because your mind needs more adventure than that. You spend time thinking about ideas, not just facts. Thinking big paints pictures of what the future can be.

ACTION ITEMS

It is important to be able to dream about the future. The ability to have stories and scenes in your mind is a way to set the stage for what could be possible. It is a way to practice and rehearse what you can do in the future. Take time to daydream. Picture yourself doing what you want to do when you are in middle school or high school or when you have a job. Where will you be, who will you be talking to, what will you look like, and what will you be learning?

Take time to wonder. Just having time to think is important. You can be a deep thinker. Give yourself time to create, explore, and connect ideas that you like. Set aside time to do this. You might even want to have a certain place you can go when you want to think, explore, and dream.

What do you like about the future? What do you think is exciting or possible? Are there comic books, science fiction books, or stories that give you ideas of what the future could be like? How about technology or inventions? Find something to read each week that helps you know more about the years to come.

Think ahead to situations you might like to be in someday. Do you picture yourself as a student council member, tennis player, church youth leader, or volunteer? Watch what those people do. Think about what you would do or say if you were in their shoes. How would you do things? Play out conversations and actions in your mind. This will give you confidence and help you do a better job in the future.

What do you need to know to prepare for the future? How will your life be different when you are an adult? Questions are ways to learn about the future. What do you want to

know more about? Every day, find one good question to ask yourself or another person that helps you be ready for the future.

FUTURE THINKER ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

Give Future Thinkers a chance to verbalize their thoughts about the future. Simply ask questions like, "What do you think you will be doing next year? What about two years from now?" Appreciate and accept their visions for what they are — forward thinking.

Share your own thoughts, ideas, and dreams as you think about what the future might bring. Sharing sparks thought and validates that the future is worthy of conversation.

As you peer into this person's future, what are the steps toward accomplishing his or her goals? What preparation is necessary? Help this person meet people, select activities, or explore opportunities that are in line with his or her visions for the future.



Organizer

Scheduling, planning, and organizing your world makes life better. People count on you to get the details right and pull a plan together.

You like to create order in your world. Schedules help you feel in control of your life. Planning makes you comfortable and calm about what you are going to do. It is fun to think ahead, organize, and include all that you want to do in your plan so you don't leave anything out. You like to think about both the big ideas and the details. It feels good to make something absolutely perfect, whether it is as simple as your hair or as complicated as a big project for school. It is important to you to be on time or even early so you are ready to start whatever you are about to do. Not only do you like order and rules for yourself, but you like them for other people too. You help yourself and others by pulling all the pieces together.

ACTION ITEMS

You like to make a schedule and stick to it. Keep a calendar for yourself so you can look at what you want to do each day and also look ahead to the week, month, and year coming up. You will feel more in control of your life if you can see it on paper.

Planning projects and events feels good to you. If you are working in a group, volunteer to be the planner and organizer. Keep a list of all the things that need to be done and who is supposed to do each one. Organize it by person or by due dates, and share your list to help everyone understand the plan.

A list can help you keep track of what you need to do. Next to each activity on your list, draw a box to the left. Then, when you have finished a task, put a check mark in the box so you can easily see how many things are done and how many are left to do. You might be surprised at how good it feels to check that box and see what you've accomplished.

You are good at creating neat, clean order. Find the best and most useful ways to organize your school supplies, locker, or bedroom. Creating neatness and then keeping up with it makes you feel good and helps you and others find what you need.

Look around you — who could benefit from the way you like to organize? Could you help organize a family collection

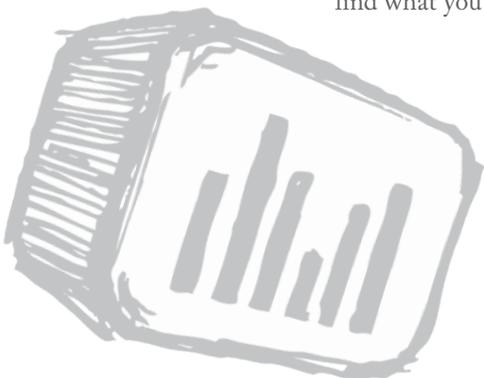
or event? Would a teacher appreciate the way you can help organize papers? Find a way to use your talent to help someone else.

ORGANIZER ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

Ask this person about how he or she likes to schedule the day. Does this person feel the time is well planned? Plant the seeds of thought by asking how someone could schedule the day, week, weekend, semester break, or summer. How can you help with these ideas and plans?

Are there ways this person can be helpful to others by organizing things for you? For instance, could he or she organize the classroom, clubroom, or science lab or manage the sports equipment? From a drawer to a family event, what would he or she feel is fun or important to plan and arrange? Offer ways that this person can organize things for you or others.

Could you connect this person with someone who is at least two years older and is good at organizing? Find someone who can model the value of organization in a person's life. This will provide more ideas and examples of ways to put organization into action.



Presence

You were born to be at the front of the room telling stories and taking the lead. Other people watch you and listen to you.

You are a natural at commanding attention. You may do this in small ways or in big ways, but you are better at it than most people, and it gives you power over a group. Sometimes humor is the way you get a group excited. You might tell a funny joke or story that helps others relax and feel connected to each other. Sometimes your leadership is more serious. Maybe there is something important to be done, and you are the spokesperson who can get the message out to people in a way that makes them want to be involved. You might someday be a teacher, a politician, a speaker, a comedian, a preacher, or a business leader. Whatever you choose to be, you are likely to have others listening to the words you speak. You naturally create an audience.

ACTION ITEMS

Some people just naturally draw the attention of others. You have what people sometimes call “presence.” People seem to pay attention to you when you speak. Think about how you can use your Presence to make a positive difference. The way you talk about others, or the activities you take part in, can influence people. How can you do that in a way that makes your friends, class, school, or community better?

There are many ways to get attention and to get others to listen. Ask people you know for ideas about how to connect with your audience. What works best? Speaking fast, slow, loud, soft, or with a pause? You might want to try being the host, master of ceremonies, or narrator for a program so you can practice.

Laughter is good for people. Challenge yourself to make the room better every time you have an audience. Your audience may be your classroom, your friends, your family, or even a small group listening to a book report. How can you raise the level of humor so it builds people up rather than bringing someone down? Consider what kind of humor you want to be known for: the kind that makes everybody feel good or the kind that hurts others?

Do you want to be a great speaker, actor, or class presenter? You may want to notice what speakers are doing that really captures your attention. Whom do you like to listen to? Are there people you have seen in person, on TV, or in a video that everyone really liked? What are three things that you liked about the way they performed? Each time you see someone you think is good, take note of what he or she does well and try to do it when you speak.

Talking, speaking, or acting in front of a group is scary to most people. Practicing a speech, a joke, or a story over and over again can help you have more confidence. You may feel nervous inside as you speak to groups, but others will not notice, especially if you practice. Your natural ability to command attention will be what they notice.

PRESENCE ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

Honor the need to perform. Take time to be an audience — whether it’s one-on-one in the kitchen or in a crowded auditorium. Understand that these kids want a reaction. Applaud, laugh, and ask for encores. Find others who appreciate the person’s talent for performing. Could he or she call Grandma to share a joke? Could you invite another person into the room to watch this talent in action? Could this person teach a topic in the classroom? Some other possible opportunities for this talent to shine include:

- speech
- choir
- band
- drama
- dance
- nursing homes
- comedy show
- variety/talent show
- birthday parties
- holiday celebrations
- assemblies
- sporting events
- family gatherings
- places of worship

Recap the highlights of this person’s performances — big or small — and point out positive responses from others.



Call attention to the details. For example, note personal presence, facial expressions, gestures, and body language. Praise comedic timing or dramatic pause. Affirm well-chosen words. Whether the overall performance is brilliant or mediocre, point out what is best about what he or she did.

Encourage repetition of the card trick, the song, or the book report so it keeps getting better. Give this person room to “try out” his or her material.



Relating

You like to start friendships and keep them for a long time — maybe even your whole life. You widen the circle of friends for yourself and others.

There are many ways to be good at relating. You might easily meet new people, learn their names, and make friends quickly wherever you go. Or you might need more time to make friends but be good at building long-lasting friendships. You might do both. If you make friends quickly, people probably view you as happy, outgoing, and instantly likeable. If you would rather spend time with a small group of friends talking, laughing, or just being together, these friends might see you as a best friend they can trust and talk to. You might be best at relating with teachers, parents, and other adults, and they can help you learn and feel good about yourself. Whatever your style of relating, people like you, and relationships are important to you.

ACTION ITEMS

Friends are an important part of your world. Are your friends your age, younger, older, or all of these ages? Do you want to make one of these friendships stronger? Make a point of getting together with this friend. Invite him or her to do things with you or spend time with your other friends. Get to know his or her family, pets, or hobbies. Let him or her get to know you too. The more time you spend together, the better friends you can become.

Beginning friendships can be fun and quick for you. One way to begin is by simply saying, “Hi” and learning a person’s name. Is there one person each week you could get to know better? Learn this person’s name and find out something new about him or her each day. Find something that both of you like. This helps build a friendship.

You might like to challenge yourself to see how many names you could learn in your school or class. Make a contest with yourself to see how many names you can learn each week. Keep a list of these names. As the list grows, so does your circle of friends.

People feel better when they have friends. When people come into a new situation, like when they are new students at school or when they don’t know anyone at a party, they probably feel nervous. You can help them by quickly welcoming them, asking their names, and introducing them to your friends.

A compliment lets another person know that you like something about him or her. It helps make the person’s day better, and it probably makes you both feel good about each other. Try to find something you like about the people

around you. Compliment at least two people each day. It might be as simple as saying, “Thanks for lending me a pencil” or “Nice shoes” as someone walks down the hall.

RELATING ACTION ITEMS FOR ADULTS

Make a point of asking about this person’s friends. Letting him or her talk about what’s going on with other kids honors this talent. Listening is affirming. Offer advice only when asked.

Relationships come in all shapes and sizes. How does this person relate best — one-on-one or in groups? With whom does he or she relate best — younger children, peers, or adults? Create opportunities for interaction. For example, when you go on an outing, have this person bring along a friend. Arrange study groups that include this individual. Are there opportunities for him or her to help younger children? How can you help encourage this person’s talent for building relationships?

Remember that this person’s reaction to the world is filtered through relationships. Interactions throughout the day affect his or her mood. Don’t take it personally. Understand, acknowledge, and listen to his or her feelings, and appreciate his or her interpretation of these interactions.



Strengths Theme Map

It is important for you to identify the themes of each of your students individually, while also being aware of the strengths of your students as a collective whole. Use the Strengths Theme Map to record, identify, and leverage the strengths of students individually and as part of the larger group. Print the Strengths Theme Map: My Classroom grid from the next page and write your students' names and top three themes in the blanks, or use the writable version in the appendix to type in this information.

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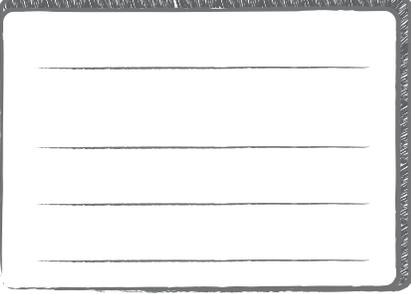
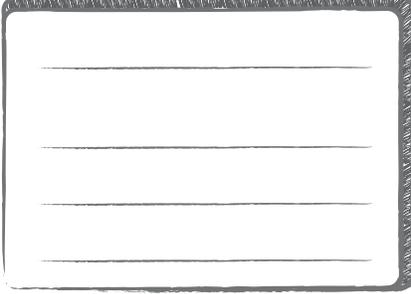
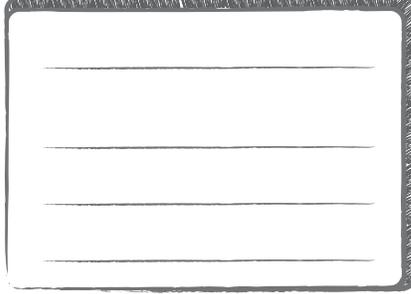
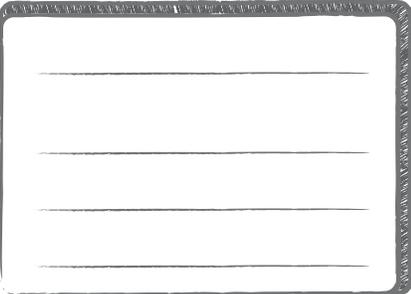
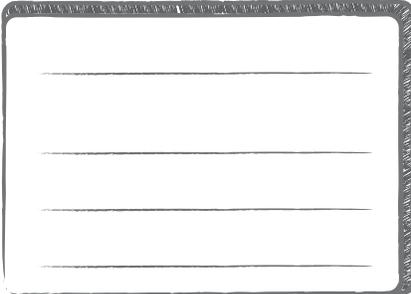
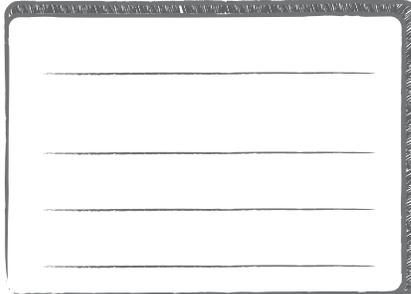
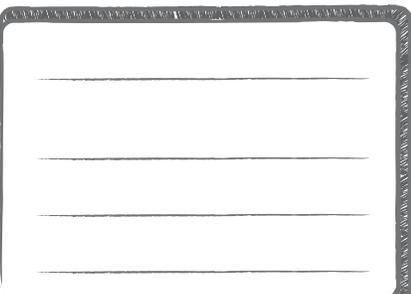
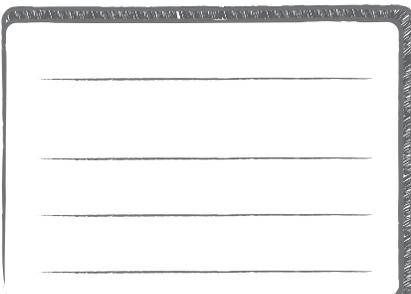
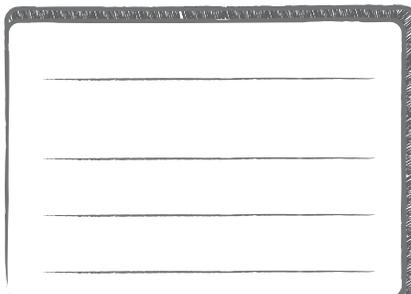
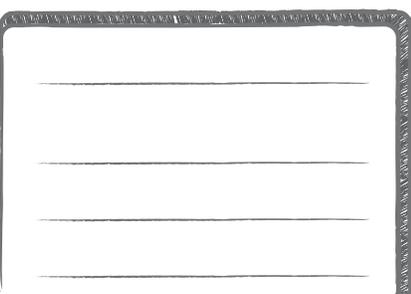
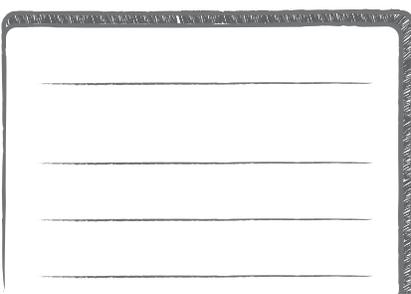
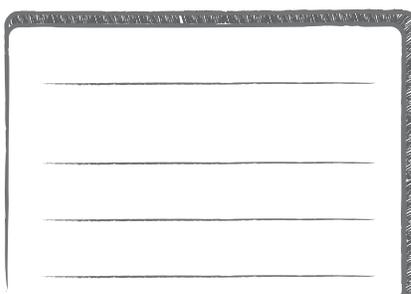
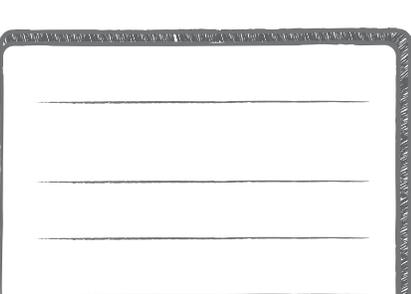
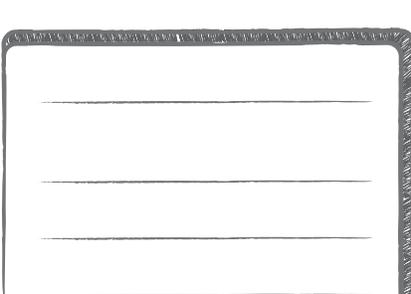
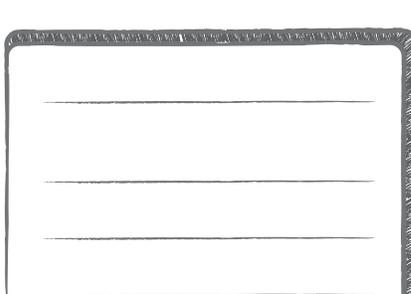
Emma
Dependability
Competing
Achieving

Felix
Competing
Dependability
Future Thinker

Ethan
Confidence
Presence
Achieving



Strengths Theme Map: My Classroom

Name It

Supporting Resources:

Customizable Strengths Nameplate

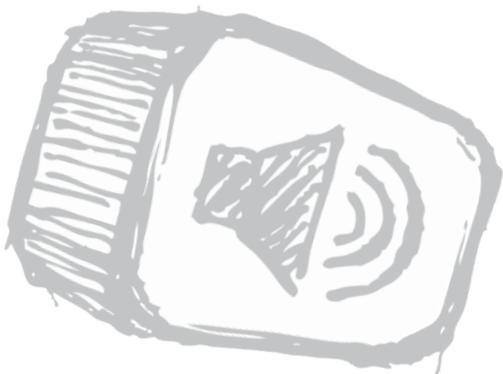
Getting the Most Out of My StrengthsExplorer Themes

Strengths Themes in My Own Words

People Who Know You

The Things I Do Well

You can help students affirm and understand their natural talents and strengths by using the results and insights they find in their StrengthsExplorer report.



Customizable Strengths Nameplate

One way to encourage students to use their strengths is to constantly remind them to think about their top three themes. Keeping these themes visible reminds students about what makes them unique. Using the customizable nameplate template provided in the appendix, have students type in their names and use the drop-down menus to select their top three themes. Then have them print the Strengths Nameplate and display it for others to see.



NAME

THEME ONE:

THEME TWO:

THEME THREE:



Getting the Most Out of My StrengthsExplorer® Themes

Helping students understand what their StrengthsExplorer themes mean to them will validate the importance of their unique, natural talents and strengths. Use the following questions in one-on-one conversations with students or in groups to help them learn more about their top three themes.

1 What was your reaction when you first saw your top three themes?

2 What new discovery have you made about yourself?

3 What surprised you?

4 What theme did you think you would see at the top but didn't? Why?

5 Have you shared your StrengthsExplorer report with anyone? What was that person's reaction?



Name It

Strengths Themes in My Own Words

Sometimes it is difficult for students to have a clear picture of how they use their strengths in their day-to-day lives. This activity will help students consider what their strengths mean to them. Using their StrengthsExplorer report, students will review each of their top three themes, highlight the words or phrases that sound the most like them, and record them in the chart in their Student Playbook. It might look something like this:

ACHIEVING	COMPETING	FUTURE THINKING
<i>(Theme Name)</i>	<i>(Theme Name)</i>	<i>(Theme Name)</i>
Have more energy	See things as a game	Dream of the future
Hurry to get started	Compete every day	Think about what is possible
Fun to achieve small goals	Winning first place is goal	How will things be different
Finishing a project feels good	Hate losing	Finding meaning is important

After explaining the instructions and sharing the example, have students complete the activity in their Student Playbook:

<i>(Theme Name)</i>	<i>(Theme Name)</i>	<i>(Theme Name)</i>

Name It



People Who Know You

Students can learn about their own strengths through the observations of others who know them well. Have students share their report with at least three people who care about them and ask these people to point out words, phrases, or sentences in the report that they think best fit the student. Students should fill out the chart as shown in this example:

WHAT POSITIVE WORDS DO PEOPLE USE TO DESCRIBE ME?	WHO USES THESE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME?	WHAT WORDS FROM MY REPORT WOULD THESE PEOPLE USE TO DESCRIBE ME?
<i>Driven</i>	<i>Mom, Ms. Green</i>	<i>In a hurry to get started; finishing a project feels good; hard work; life is a game</i>
<i>Pensive</i>	<i>Lynn, Joseph, Jacob</i>	<i>Dream about the future; how will things be different; finding meaning</i>
<i>Laser focused</i>	<i>Lynn, Dad, Hayley</i>	<i>Good grades mean a lot; feel you could and should be doing more; think about the important things in life</i>

Name It

After explaining the instructions and sharing the example, have students complete the activity in their Student Playbook:

WHAT POSITIVE WORDS DO PEOPLE USE TO DESCRIBE ME?	WHO USES THESE WORDS TO DESCRIBE ME?	WHAT WORDS FROM MY REPORT WOULD THESE PEOPLE USE TO DESCRIBE ME?



The Things I Do Well

It's important for students to connect the things they do well with their top three themes. In their Student Playbook, students will identify three things they do well and write them in the first column. For each thing that they do well, they will come up with three ways they have gotten good at the activity and write those in the next column. Then they will write their top three themes in the circles and draw arrows connecting them to the descriptions of how they became good at doing these activities. Use this example to explain the activity to students:

THINGS I DO WELL	HOW DID I GET GOOD AT THIS?	MY TOP THREE THEMES
<i>Made state in cross country</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Ran 50 miles a week</i> ▪ <i>Wanted to beat Frank</i> ▪ <i>Best friend was on track team</i> 	<p>Competing</p> <p>Dependability</p> <p>Organizer</p>
<i>Learned the names of 25 new kids in school</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Matched their first name with the image of a famous person with that name in my head</i> ▪ <i>Said their name 3 times the first time I talked with them</i> ▪ <i>Wrote each of their names down after I was introduced to them</i> 	
<i>Made an "A" in English class</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Impressed Mrs. Morgan</i> ▪ <i>Beat Lauren on the mid-term</i> ▪ <i>Was responsible to turn in all homework assignments promptly and met every deadline</i> 	

Name It

After sharing this example, have students use the worksheet in their Student Playbook (shown on the next page) to complete this activity for themselves.

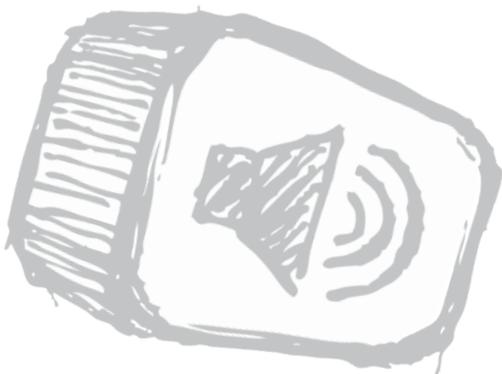
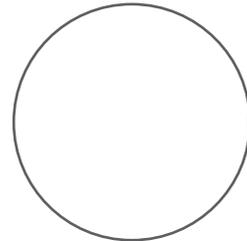
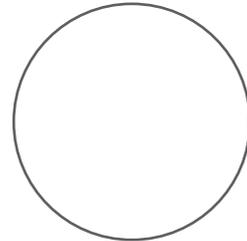
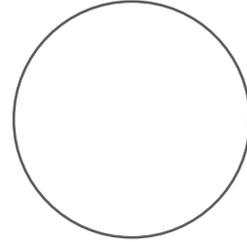


The Things I Do Well

Name It

THINGS I DO WELL	HOW DID I GET GOOD AT THIS?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ▪ ▪
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ▪ ▪
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ▪ ▪

MY TOP THREE THEMES



Claim It

Supporting Resources:

Focus on You

Themes in Action

Treasure Hunt: Seeking Out Differences

Treasure Hunt: Understanding My Top Themes

Give students an opportunity to reflect on how their strengths have served them in their past and help them to connect those successes to how they can use them in the future.



Focus on You

Focus on You is an activity to help you get to know your students better. Ask each student to provide the following information:

- Name
- What I Like to Do (Interests or Hobbies)
- My Top Three Themes
- One Theme and How I Have Used It or Would Like to Use It

Let students share their answers one at a time. While each student is talking, record the answers in the space provided. Use the blank pages that follow to create your own charts. Adapt the columns as you see fit. For example, some other items you might include could be:

- one success and how one of your themes contributed
- three words to describe your school year
- one way you used a theme this week
- what you can do in the future using this theme

Claim It

Pointers for Using Focus on You

You may want to let the students suggest items that could be included. Change the items around and make Focus on You a weekly activity. It can be a great way to get students focused in the morning, after lunch or recess, or at the beginning of a class.

NAME	WHAT I LIKE TO DO (INTERESTS OR HOBBIES)	MY THREE THEMES	ONE THEME AND HOW I HAVE USED IT OR WOULD LIKE TO USE IT
Miguel	Swim Eat Read books	Discoverer Presence Relating	Discoverer: I love to read about people and adventures.
Norah	Play flute Baby-sit Talk on the phone	Caring Confidence Dependability	Dependability: I like to help my friends and take care of little kids.

Themes in Action

It is important for students to make the connections between their strengths and natural talents and the actions that they take. Use this activity to illustrate your students' themes in action.

Instructions for This “Themes in Action” Activity

Print copies of the worksheet on the following page and distribute it to students. Ask your students to write their top three themes in the three boxes in the left column of the worksheet. Then have them write about a recent time, instance, or example of when they used that theme — or in other words, when they have seen the theme in action. This example could have happened at home, at school, with friends, or in any setting.

After your students have completed the worksheet, go around the room and have them share one of their themes and how they have seen it in action recently. Depending on the size of the group, you could have them share one theme in action or all three.

Additional Ideas

- Tell students to take their “Themes in Action” worksheet home. Ask them to interview their parents, teachers, coaches, counselors, friends, or anyone who is important to them to find out from the people they interview how they have seen their top themes in action.
- Make this a monthly exercise. Keep your students constantly thinking about the ways that they spontaneously use their talents.



My Themes in Action

List your three themes. Then share a specific example of a time when you used this theme at school, at home, or with your friends.

THEME NAME	THEME IN ACTION

Claim It

Treasure Hunt: Seeking Out Different Themes

For this activity, students will need to wear name tags with their top three themes on them. You may want to let students design the name tags themselves, or you could use the certificate on the last page of the report to make name tags. You may even want to laminate the certificate so it can be used again and again. Copy the following page, Treasure Hunt: Seeking Out Different Themes, for all of your students. Instruct them to find five people who have a different theme from any of their own top three and learn what they like best about that theme. After students complete the activity, have them discuss what they learned about a new theme. You might list each theme on the board, along with all the words used to describe it underneath.

Claim It



Treasure Hunt: Seeking Out Different Themes

Find five different people who have a theme in their top three that is different from any of your own. Write the person's name, the theme name, and what he or she likes best about the theme.

NAME	THEME NAME	WHAT DOES THIS PERSON LIKE BEST ABOUT THIS THEME?

Claim It

Treasure Hunt: Understanding My Top Themes

For this version of Treasure Hunt, students will again need name tags with their names and top three themes. This time, they will hunt for other students who have the same themes as theirs. The themes don't have to be in the same order.

Copy the following page, Treasure Hunt: Understanding My Themes, for all of your students. Tell each student to find two people who have his or her first theme anywhere in their top three. Students should ask these people what they like best about that theme. Then have each student find two people who have his or her second theme somewhere in their top three and two who have his or her third theme somewhere in their top three. After they have filled out the chart, have students report what they've discovered as additional positive or helpful aspects of their top three themes.

Claim It



Treasure Hunt: Understanding My Top Themes

Find two people who have your first theme anywhere in their own top three. Ask these people what they like best about the theme. Next, find two people who have your second theme somewhere in their top three and then find two people who have your third theme somewhere in their top three. Ask them the same question and fill out the worksheet below.

First theme name: _____

NAME	WHAT DOES THIS PERSON LIKE BEST ABOUT THIS THEME?

Second theme name: _____

NAME	WHAT DOES THIS PERSON LIKE BEST ABOUT THIS THEME?

Third theme name: _____

NAME	WHAT DOES THIS PERSON LIKE BEST ABOUT THIS THEME?

Claim It

Aim It

Supporting Resource:

My Strengths Success Activity

Helping students find practical applications for their strengths is the best way for them to see the immediate benefit in areas that are most important to their success.

Aim It



My Strengths Success Activity

By learning to apply their strengths in a productive way, students will find ways to reach their goals and be at their best. Whether they know it or not, they use their strengths in daily activities and situations. This activity can help them identify how, when, where, and with whom they use their strengths. By reflecting on these items, they can begin to apply their top three themes more productively to reach their goals.

Aim It



My Strengths Success Activity Worksheet

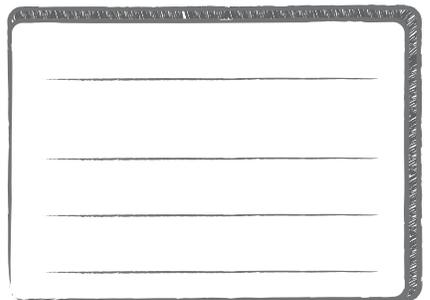
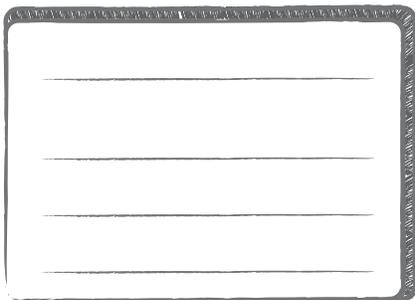
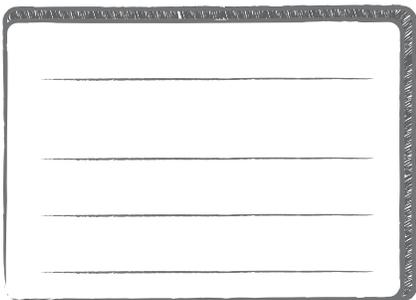
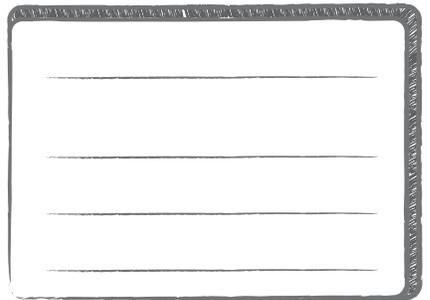
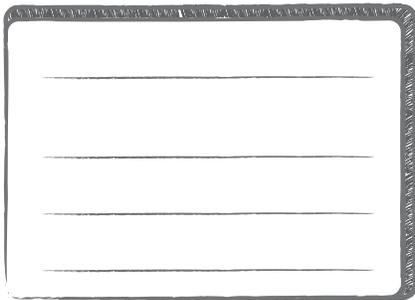
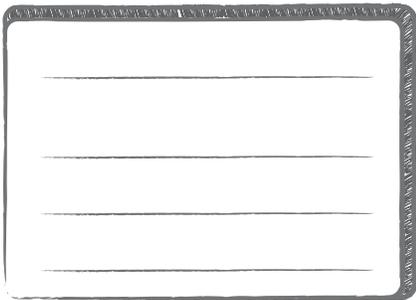
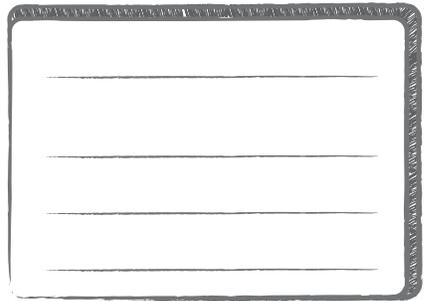
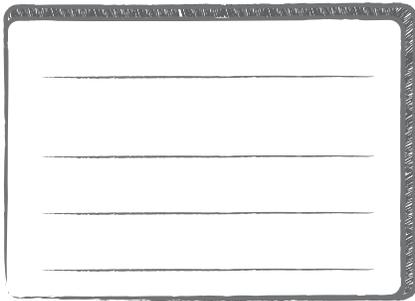
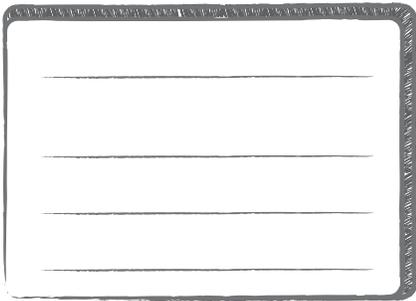
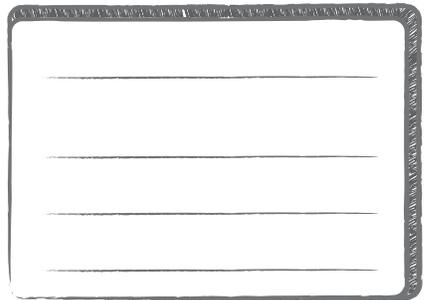
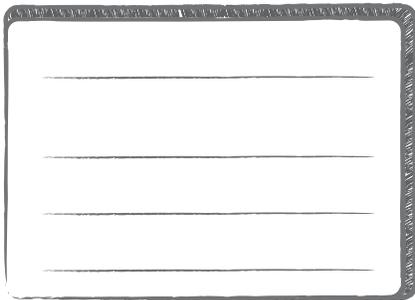
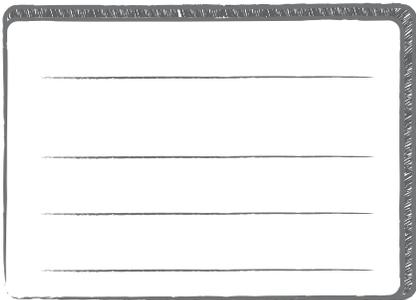
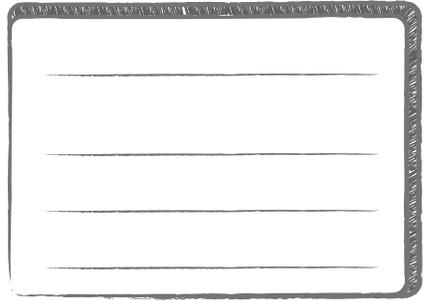
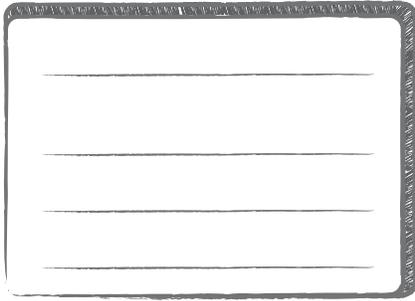
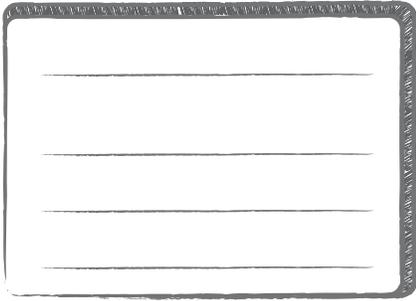
Complete this worksheet and share the results with someone important in your life. Ask for that person’s advice and observations about what you have written.

TOP THREE THEMES	WHAT I AM GOOD AT	HOW I WAS SUCCESSFUL	WHICH THEMES DID I USE? HOW DID I USE THEM?	WHAT ARE MY GOALS?	HOW WILL I ACHIEVE MY GOALS?	WHICH THEMES WILL I USE? HOW WILL I USE THEM?	WHO ARE MY PARTNERS IN ACHIEVING MY GOALS?

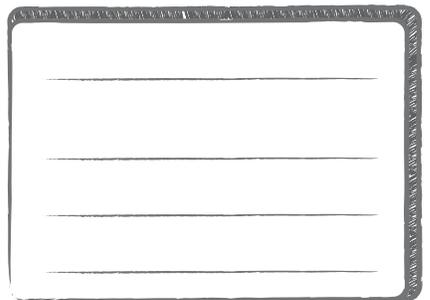
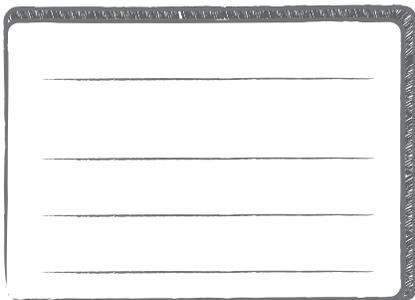
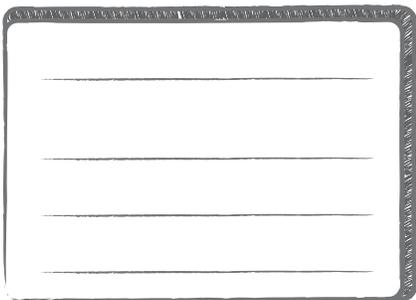
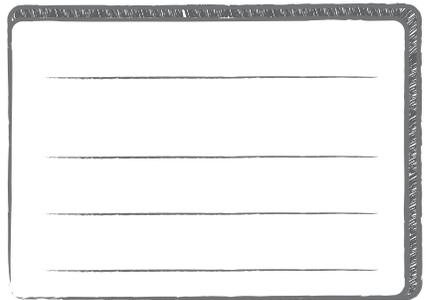
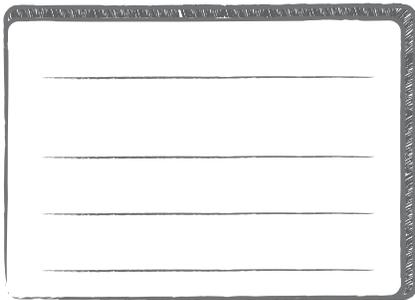
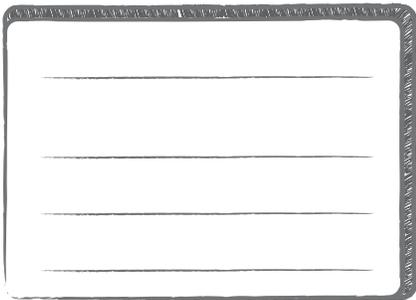
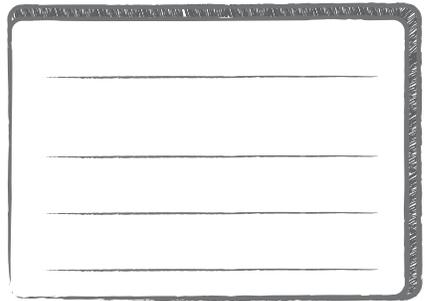
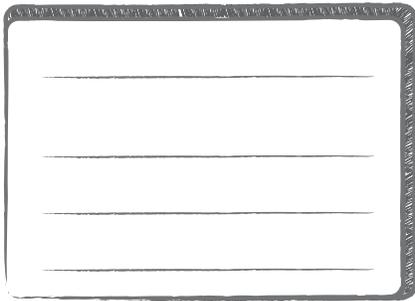
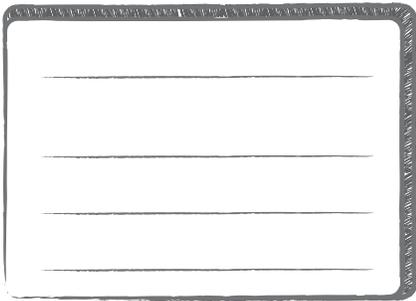
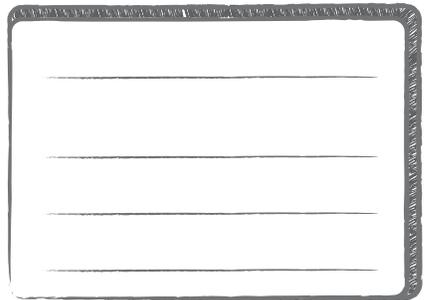
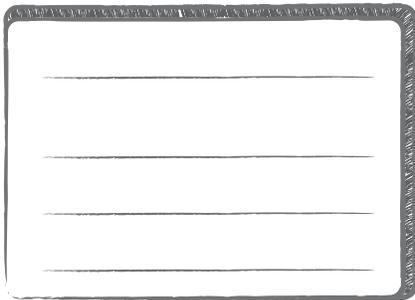
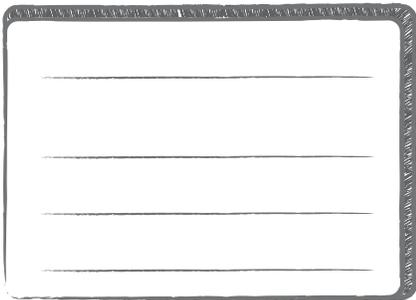
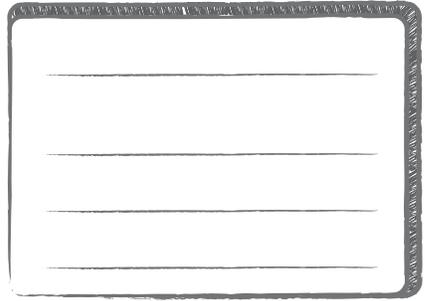
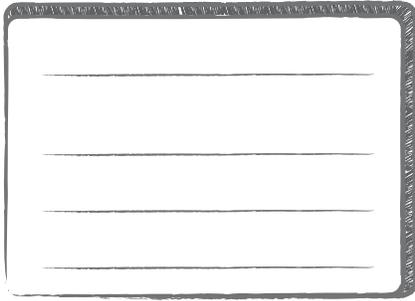
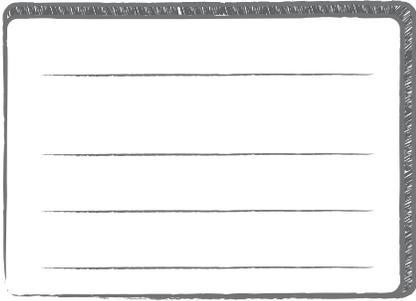


Appendix

Strengths Theme Map: My Classroom

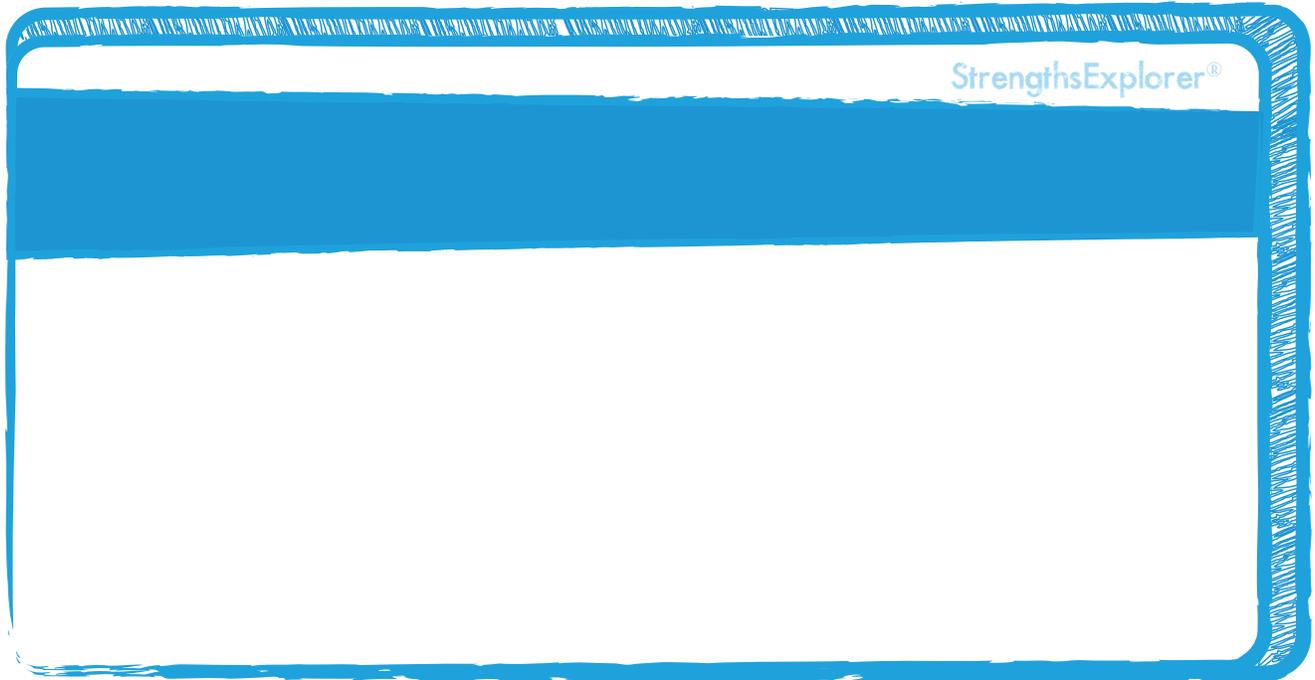


Strengths Theme Map: My Classroom



Customizable Strengths Nameplate

It is important for students to be aware of their top three themes. Using the Customizable Strengths Nameplate below, have them type their name in the blue box and then select their top three themes from the drop-down menus. When they are finished, have them print and display their nameplate.



Notes

A large, empty rectangular area with rounded corners, intended for taking notes. The area is currently blank.

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