

## 5th Grade

### September:

- **Book 1: One by Kathryn Otoshi (CARES Book-Week 1) \*We have this book\***
  - **Activity:** After reading the book, have each student make a paper cut-out of themselves and decorate it with as many colors as they want, because they are unique just like the colors in "One." When the cut-outs are done, have students talk about words that are hurtful, and have them participate with words that are hurtful that they may have heard before (making sure not to use any names and bad words). For each hurtful word or saying they must crumple their paper cut-out. This represents how hurtful words can make people feel, just like Blue when he was picked on, they make them feel crumpled and small. After, have the students give examples of nice words and things to say to people and with each one un-crumple their paper cut-out. At the end, after their cut-out is flattened out, it would show that the paper still has some wrinkles in it. This shows that even after kind words and time, people are still affected by hurtful words and will carry it with them. Have a discussion about how to stand up to others if they are saying hurtful things.
- **Book 2: [Abuela's Weave by Omar S. Castaneda](#) (Hispanic Heritage Week 9/19-9/23)**
  - **Activity:** Discuss the following with the class before reading:
    - What is tradition? What is traditional craft? (Teachers can bring some samples to show what traditional craft is, e.g., Chinese paper cuts, Mexican blankets or pottery. Explain that different cultures make things that are "traditional" to their own culture. These things are called "traditional crafts." These crafts are often passed on from one generation to the next.)
  - Discuss the following after reading:
    - What traditions did this family have?
    - What kind of family traditions do you share at home (e.g., on holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas, going to the park on weekends, etc.)?
    - Have you ever learned from an older relative how to make something? Did you enjoy learning the new skill?

### October:

- **Book 1: [Heroes by Ken Mochizuki](#) (Respect Week)**
  - **Activity:** After reading this story, discuss as a class the answers to these questions:
    - How do you choose your friends?

- What traits do you consider important in a friend?
  - Once the students answer the questions, have them draft a letter of appreciation to someone. It can be a friend, family member, teacher, etc. Have the student include examples of how the person they are writing to has shown respect or made them feel respected.
- **Book 2: [Pigskins to Paintbrushes by Don Tate](#) (National Art Day)**
  - **Activity:** After reading discuss the following with the class after reading:
    - Define what it means to be different. List ways that Ernest was different than the other kids living in The Bottom. Consider how being different benefitted Ernest as an adult.
    - Artists are observers of life. They notice small details that others overlook. Explain how being different may have influenced Ernest's artistic observational skills later in life.
  - If there is time, have the students draw a picture of what makes them different or what makes them see life differently than others.

## November:

- **Book 1: [Granddad Budd: A Veteran's Day Story by Sharon Ferry](#) (Veterans Day)**
  - **Activity:** Discuss with the class what Veteran's Day is. After reading, ask students if they know any veterans and how they can show appreciation for them. Share with students that it is not only important to show appreciation and thanks to these veterans, but it is also important to understand their true value on this day. Have students write a letter to a veteran.
- **Book 2: [Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey by Doug Kuntz and Amy Shrodes](#) (Kindness Week)**
  - **Activity:** Pre-reading questions:
    - Do you have a family pet? If so, what animal do you have and what is their name? How long have they been in your family and how do they make you feel?
    - Have you ever had a pet that got lost or ran away? How did that feel and how did it affect your family?
    - If you lost your pet, what length would you go to in order to search for and find them?
    - Could you imagine yourself getting the whole world to work together to find your missing pet? How do you think that is possible?
  - Post-reading Questions:
    - Why do you think Kunkush was so important to his family?

- Do you think animals have feelings? How do you think Kunkush was feeling throughout his entire journey?
- Why do you think people around the world wanted to help reunite Kunkush with his family?
- If you had seen the news story of Kunkush the missing cat, would you have helped search for his family? Why or why not?
- How does this story relate to kindness?

## December:

- **Book 1: [The Trees of the Dancing Goats by Patricia Polacco \(Holidays\)](#)**
  - **Activity:** After reading discuss the following questions:
    - How do our actions affect the world and how does the world affect our actions?
    - How does diversity strengthen our community?
- **Book 2: [The Story of Kwanzaa by Donna L. Washington \(Holidays\)](#)**
  - **Activity:** After reading discuss the following questions:
    - What did you learn about Kwanzaa?
    - Are there any similarities or differences between Kwanzaa and other holidays you know about?
    - Let's think back to the question we asked after reading The Trees of the Dancing Goats, how does diversity strengthen our community?

## January:

- **Book 1: [Beautifully Me by Nabela Noor \(Wellness Week\)](#)**
  - **Activity:** After reading the book discuss the following questions:
    - Celebrate your strengths and the strengths of those around you!  
What are you good at?
    - What makes you special, unique, or different?
- **Book 2: [The Black Book of Colors by Menena Cottin](#)**
  - **Activity:** The Black Book of Colors is also really interesting because it provides an opportunity to get students thinking about how blind people perceive the world, and whether they can be taught the meaning of colors. Students learn from an early age about blind people and sign language, but they aren't really given the chance to think about how blind people learn sight-based information, like color. Can blind people sense color? Can blind people be taught to distinguish between different colors?
    - Optional Blindness Activity and Questions:
      - Close your eyes. Think about your favorite color. Tell us about it.

- Did we experience that color? How?
- Is it possible to show a blind person color? Why or why not?
- If a person can't see color, are they blind? Why or why not?
- Do people who are blind and people who have sight experience color the same way? How is it similar or different?
- If not everyone can see color, does it mean that it's really there?
- Do you know someone who is colorblind (or are colorblind yourself)? How might their perceptions of color be different from yours?
- Do blind people need to be taught color, or is it something that they learn on their own?
- If a blind person knew that strawberries were red, do you think if they had surgery done to make them able to see that they would recognize a strawberry as a strawberry just by looking at it? Why or why not?
- Are all of our senses connected or are they distinct?

## February:

- **Book 1: [The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson](#) (Black History Month)**
  - **Activity:** Annie and Clover made friends slowly. They watched each other and moved carefully together, step-by-step. Talk about how you make friends. What do you say and do? Do you make friends in the same way in the neighborhood as you do at school? Where else have you made a friend? Do your friends look like you and act like you (same gender, same skin color, same religion, same personality, etc.)?
- **Book 2: [Say Something by Peggy Moss](#) (Say Something)**
  - **Activity:**
    - Before reading, ask, when is it easy to say something? When is it hard to say something?
    - After reading discuss the following:
      - After this event the storyteller decides to sit next to the girl who "always sits alone." Why? What changes do you predict for the storyteller now that she has chosen a helpful action?
      - "If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito." After reading the story, what does this quote mean to you now?
      - Can you recall a situation when someone was being bullied or teased? -What could you try saying or doing in order to be a helpful bystander?

## March:

- **Book 1: Schomburg The Man Who Built a Library by Carole Boston Weatherford (Read Across America) **\*\*On EPIC\*\*****
  - **Activity:** After reading discuss the following questions:
    - How did Schomburg's interaction with his fifth-grade teacher shape his lifelong curiosity about African heritage? What did she think about African history? How did Schomburg respond to that opinion? Do you agree with him or his teacher?
    - Which of Schomburg's actions show that he has pride in his afroborinqueño heritage? Why is it important for him to explore his own culture?
    - What are ways that you explore or show pride in your culture?
- **Book 2: [Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream by Crystal Hubbard](#) (Women's History)**
  - **Activity:**
    - Before reading ask the following questions:
      - Ask students about their involvement with sports. What sports do you play? Why do you like to play them? Were you ever told that you can't play a sport? Why not?
    - After reading ask the following questions:
      - Marcenia played baseball with the boys on the playground, but Mr. Street wasn't going to let her come to his all-boys baseball camp. Do you think girls and boys should play sports together?
      - How do you think sports can bring people together?
      - What can you learn from Marcenia?

## April:

- **Book 1: [Just Ask! by Sonia Sotomayor](#) (Diversity Week)**
  - **Activity:**
    - Before the story begins, the author writes "a letter to readers" in which she talks about her diabetes and the way it set her apart from other kids. She openly shares her purpose for writing this book and her hopes for the ways readers will see themselves in her characters. Read the letter aloud before reading the book.
    - We all are good at different things and express ourselves in different ways. Think about a team you have been on. What would have happened if everyone played the same position or had the same strengths?

- We all know people or have met people who are different from us. Thinking of how the kids in the book interacted with each other, what might be some ways we can build relationships with people who are different from us? What did the characters in the book have in common with each other and with us? What are things you can do to support people who are different than you are?
- **Book 2: [The Girl Who Thought in Pictures by Julia Finley Mosca \(Autism Awareness\)](#)**
  - **Activity:**
    - Think about people you know. Do they all learn the same, move the same? Our abilities are part of who we are, and what is known as a disability may bring challenges and joy. What are some things about you that make you who you are?
    - The girl who couldn't speak became a speaker. Using her voice to help others is called advocacy. What does she advocate for?
    - The world needs your ideas. What skills would you like to develop that you are already interested in or good at?

## May:

- **Book 1: [Eyes that Kiss in the Corners by Joanna Ho \(Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage\)](#)**
  - **Activity:**
    - Stories of our family and our history are part of what makes us who we are. Think about a time you had fun with someone in your family. Describe the event. Different families have their own stories and events. What is good about being part of a colorful and diverse community with all those different stories?
    - The girl talked about how special she felt when she was with her Mama and Amah and little sister Mei-Mei, telling stories and playing games. Who in your life makes you feel special, and what do they do that makes you feel that way? In what ways can you pass that on to others?
- **Book 2: [A Day for Rememberin': Inspired by the True Events of the First Memorial Day by Leah Henderson \(Military\)](#)**
  - **Activity:** Discuss the following questions after reading the book:
    - Why is it important to know about the First Memorial Day?
    - What is the purpose of Memorial Day?
    - How do we celebrate it, and why do we celebrate it that way?

## June:

- **Book 1: [30,000 Stitches by Amanda Davis](#) (Flag Day)**
  - **Activity:**
    - Before reading discuss the following questions:
      - What is a symbol?
      - What is an example of an American symbol?
    - After reading discuss the following:
      - What does our Flag represent?
      - Are there any symbols that have significance in your life?
- **Book 2: [We Are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom](#)**
  - **Activity:** Discuss the following questions after reading the book:
    - How is water important to you and your daily life? Brainstorm all the ways we use water every day. Talk about where your water comes from. Come up with ideas to protect and save your water.
    - In the book, a young girl talks about fighting for those who cannot fight for themselves—the animals, plants, trees, rivers, and lakes. How can you fight for them? What resources exist in your community that help aid those that cannot fight for themselves?
    - If time permits have the students create their own posters for a part of nature that they would want to protect.