

Book Builders

Lesson Plan

Adapt this one-period **lesson plan** for any grade level and follow it with a simple and powerful **service project**. The **reflection** brings learning and service impact together.

Anticipatory Set: (5-7 minutes)

Show the Kid President “Awesome Year” video to introduce the concept of social capital and discuss things we can each do to make the school a better place.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQOcEDD5hR8> Discuss:

- What are some things named in the video to help other students have an awesome year?
- Why would we want to help others have an awesome year? How does it affect others? How does it affect me? How does it impact school culture?
- Define *social capital* and relate it to the discussion above. *Social capital* is "Personal investment of time through social interactions that builds trust and enables participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives" - Robert Putnam
- Many positive actions build social capital in the school. With a high level of good will built up, it is easier to move on or forgive when something negative happens. (Similar to how a bank account with lots of capital isn't set back when we need to make a minor withdrawal.)

Part One: (10 minutes) Discuss the concept of developing a positive school community by practicing positive actions through character traits. Brainstorm and define/give examples of the traits that are important at your school across grade levels, such as caring, fairness, courage, perseverance, honesty, and abundance mindset.

- Discuss how these [character traits](#) could help to build community/social capital and make a difference in the school culture. Watch YouTube videos about character traits.
- Make a list of 25 things to do to “create community” across grade levels in the school(s).

Variation for older students: Work in small groups to brainstorm a list of 25 things and decide how to share that list with others in the school.

Variation for younger students: Invite older students to class to brainstorm with small groups of students.

Part Two: (15 minutes) Read a pattern book and discuss the structure and content of pattern books. Then brainstorm content for an original pattern book that models a specific character trait.

- Read aloud the picture book, *The Important Book* by Margaret Wise Brown.
- This book is a pattern book, with a repetitive format. Students may recall other pattern books, like *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*. Talk about how children's books can communicate important concepts.
- Tell the students they will be writing a pattern book that models a character trait. Share this Learning to Give “[Character Education](#)” page with students and give them time to review and explore one trait of their choice. Each lesson connects the trait to community and generosity.



Service Project

This service project may be started in class and completed in subsequent days, either during class or at home.

Project Overview: Students collaborate in groups to create a picture book based on a character trait, with the message of taking actions to build community and an awesome school year. The final books are published on posters, with each poster a separate page. The students read (and act out) their story, set to music, at a school assembly.

Procedure:

- Group students by the character trait they choose. Students meet in small groups by trait to brainstorm ideas for a simple pattern book format that will focus on a single character trait. They discuss patterns for a book and the related content.
- Meet as a whole group to brainstorm the groups' book format ideas on a white board or Smartboard. Note: The class may decide to follow the same pattern book format across all the groups, but the character traits modeled in the books will be different.
- Each group develops an electronic or printed DRAFT of their book pattern with the chosen character trait.
- They decide on pictures to accompany the words to the story.
- Students take the book through the revision and peer editing process and create a final draft.
- The older students share the final draft with younger students and leave a classroom set of the booklets with the classroom.
- The service project is that they create a giant size copy of their book on posters, present their books at a school assembly accompanied by music, and discuss the ideas presented to promote a positive school culture based on positive actions and character.
- Final copies of the giant books can be displayed in the school hallway or other public area.

Variation for younger students: Students create a video talk about a character trait to share with other classes in other buildings.

Variation for older students: Students create a simple pattern book template (using presentation software) in advance, to be filled in when they meet with students in a younger classroom. The final book may be completed as homework. Note: The collaboration of writing the book with a student in another class and sharing the book with others will build community across the building.

Reflection:

Follow the project with a brief reflection.

- Discuss the impact of building relationships with the other students in the building.
- Have students share reflections about the process of building and sharing the books.
- Brainstorm and propose ideas for future relationship-building projects with other students in the building.

Follow-up: Discuss what they'd like to do next to continue building relationships and promoting character traits in their school community.

