



Rick

Activity 1: Snowball Hero

Format:

- Individual
- Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion

Materials:

- Scraps of paper
- Pencils

Timing:

- Following the pre-reading discussion

Instructions:

1. Distribute a few scraps of paper to each students (or one piece of paper they can rip up)
2. Ask students to think about a time that they did something courageous or stood up for something they believed in - either at home, school or in their community.
 - If they can't think of anything, they can share a friend, TV character or real life hero's story that they were inspired by.
3. Ask them to write this story on a piece of paper, and then to crumple it into a snowball.
4. When everyone is done, have everyone stand up and line the perimeter of the room.
5. Tell students that they are going to have a friendly snowball fight! They can throw their papers into the middle of the room.
6. Once all the snowballs have landed, have students pick up other paper balls and throw them around the room again.
7. Ask each student to collect 1-2 snowballs (or more depending on how many were created) and return to their seats.
8. Go around the room (or pick 2-3 students) to read the story on their paper snowball.
9. Facilitate a discussion about why it's important to stand up for what we believe in, and why it can sometimes be difficult.

Activity 2: Who I Am Outside, and Inside

Format:

- Individual

Materials:

- Letter size paper
- Colouring pencils, markers or crayons

Timing:

- Following the pre-reading discussion

Instructions:

1. Guide students to draw a self-portrait where half of their face looks like they do on the outside and half of their face shows what they look like on the inside.
 - You may need to discuss what sorts of things they can draw about their inside selves first (ie. things they love/enjoy).
2. Display the pictures in your classroom.

Activity 3: Celebrating Differences

Format:

- Teacher-Facilitated Group Discussion

Materials:

- None

Timing:

- While Reading

Instructions:

1. Guide students to sit in a circle on the floor.
2. Ask for one volunteer to sit in the middle of the circle.
3. The person in the middle will make a statement about someone or something they love or appreciate. Examples could include:
 - I love my neighbor who... was born out of the state, loves basketball, has a pet at home, is an only child, etc.

- I love my sibling because...they always share their toys, they are nice to me, we like to do the same things
4. Have everyone in the circle raise their hand if they relate to the statement in some way.
 5. Choose one person who identifies with the statement, to switch seats and be the person in the middle.
 6. Repeat steps 3-5 several times, making sure to notice how many hands are raised with each statement.
 7. Ask students if they have something in common with someone that they didn't know about before.
 - What do they think is cool about learning about what others like and appreciate?
 8. To conclude the activity, use the answers to the previous questions as a starting point to discuss when differences aren't celebrated and can lead to things like homophobia.
 - Discuss examples of homophobia from the book and any others they may have witnessed in real life, or on TV, the Internet, etc.

Activity 4: Trading Places

Format:

- Individual Activity

Materials:

- Letter size paper
- Pencil

Timing:

- While Reading

Instructions:

1. Guide students to think about what they would do if they were Rick's friend.
 - What would they tell him?
 - How would they support him?
2. Have students write a letter to Rick with the advice, encouragement, guidance, etc. they would want or need to hear if they were in Rick's shoes.

Activity 5: Ally Up!

Format:

- Small groups

Materials:

- Letter size paper
- Pencils

Timing:

- Following post-reading discussion

Instructions:

1. Watch the video to better understand the concept of allyship (1:52):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZBUmq4EEf0>
2. Introduce students to the activity:
 - In small groups, you will write a short script for the scenario you will be sharing with them.
 - Remind students that the goal is to focus on the actions they can take and the words they can say to be allies in this situation. Nobody in the group should play the person being teased, everyone should have a role as an ally.
 - Share the following scenario: Imagine that there is a new student in your class this year and they don't seem to enjoy the games or toys the other girls do. They don't dress the way other girls in your class do either. One day, you and your friends (your group) notice that they are being teased about these things on the playground by someone in a different class. You and your friends want to be allies to the new student, what do you say and do?
3. Break students into small groups of 5-6 to write their script and develop their skits.
4. Have students present their skits to the class.
5. Thank students for their vulnerability and lead a discussion with the class:
 - How does it feel to be an ally?
 - What is scary about stepping up as an ally?
 - Why is it important to be an ally?
 - How can you commit to being an ally in your own life?
6. Guide students to complete a journal entry about these reflection questions.

Activity 6: Community Allyship

Format:

- Teacher-Facilitated Group Activity

Materials:

- Chalkboard, white board, chart paper (or other visual brainstorming tool)
- Other – depending on action plan identified

Timing:

- Following post-reading discussion

Instructions:

1. Guide students to brainstorm a challenge that is affecting students in their school/community.
2. Co-create an action plan to step in as allies and collectively take action to improve their school environment. This might include:
 - Creating artwork, murals, etc. about inclusion and belonging.
 - Creating signs saying people are welcome to use washrooms of their choice.
 - Writing messages of affirmation to put on mirrors in the building.
 - Creating a "buddy bench".
3. Execute the plan you created!
4. Lead the class through a reflection on the process of identifying the challenge and taking action to improve the experiences of others.
 - What were the highlights and challenges of the process?
 - How did it make them feel?
 - Have they received any feedback from others?