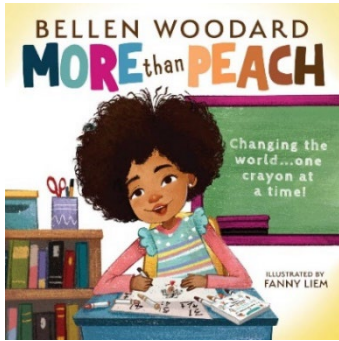




Asset Building Champions

ASSETYEAR



Book of the Month

Title: More than Peach
Author: Bellen Woodard
Illustrator: Fanny Liem
Publisher: Scholastic Inc.

Key Phrase

Spark a Change



BOOK SUMMARY

This book is a true story about Bellen Woodard who is a young lady with a great family and caring friends. She notices in class one day that she is asked for the "skin color" crayon and is expected to hand the "peach" crayon in response. It has happened before and has not bothered Bellen, but today she notices it more, and realizes it makes her uncomfortable. After talking with a trusted adult about the problem, she decides to create a loving response that highlights everyone's individuality, while not shaming her friends or classmates. It is received well and soon spreads beyond Bellen's classroom. This book is about recognizing that your words have power for good, and you can spark a change when you say it in positive ways.



FRAMEWORK

Social Emotional Learning:

Social Awareness: Tolerance, Acceptance, Belonging, and Safety

Self-Awareness: Identify Emotions, Self-Perception/Identity, Recognizing Strengths, Sense of Self-Confidence, and Self-Efficacy

Developmental Assets:

Empowerment: Community Values Youth, Youth as Resources

Social Competencies: Planning and Decision Making, Interpersonal Competence, Cultural Competence, Peaceful Conflict Resolution

Positive Identity: Personal Power, Self-Esteem, Sense of Purpose, Positive Cultural Identity

Developmental Relationships:

Share Power: Respect Me, Collaborate, Let Me Lead

Expand Possibilities: Inspire, Broaden Horizons, Connect



GOALS

- Students will approach themselves and others with a growth mindset, recognizing they can have power in standing up for change.
- Students will empathize with the way words and ideas can make others feel.
- Students will celebrate themselves and others in their unique attributes.
- Students will intentionally commit to stand up for themselves or others in need of change.



KEY IDEAS

Knowing one has the power to influence others can give the confidence to spark change as needed. Each person has their own voice and ideas to share. Overcoming feelings of worry and vulnerability to share those ideas allows for deeper connections and true understanding of others. Without the courage to speak up when things don't feel right, individuals can be made to feel insignificant. It is up to each person to find their voice and share those feelings to be their unique self. Once those feelings have been shared, it is up to the person hearing those insights to respect them and do all we can to rectify anything in which we have played a part.

In the story, the character sets a positive intention in her response instead of taking offense. She starts this by addressing her own feelings with a trusted adult and considering ways to address the specific problem she faces. She decides to turn her feelings into a positive opportunity for her and her classmates to learn and grow. She empowers herself and others by taking this growth approach. When children learn they can stand up for themselves while still giving others the space to disagree or be wrong, they gain tools for personal growth and relationship building. With these tools, students gain the confidence to become positive leaders or even activists, identifying problems in the world that they can influence for the better.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

The Power of Sharing

K-6

Materials: Two clear cups of water, food coloring

1. Bring out two clear cups of water, one mostly full and one less than half full. Show them to the students.
2. Add a couple drops of food coloring to the first cup. Let the coloring dissipate throughout and ask the students what they notice.
3. Now pour some of the colored water into the clear water. Now what do they notice?
4. Tell students the coloring represents our influence and words. They can have the power to change others around us for positive or negative ways. If we all had cups of water in our hand then this food coloring could affect all our cups with more sharing.
5. Explain to the students that in the book we are reading today we will learn about having a positive influence on others and sparking a change through our courage to speak out.

Note: you can ask for volunteers to help hold the cups or add more cups to the activity depending on your class. Consider doing it outside with everyone having a cup to get them moving.



READ THE BOOK

Show students the book and read the title, author, illustrator, and publisher.

Explain this book was written by the little girl in the story, Bellen.

1. Ask them what they notice about the title and cover art.
2. As we read, listen to the way she describes her world. For older students: Look for examples of skin tone throughout the illustrations and words.
3. How does your morning differ from hers? How is it the same?
4. Point out to students how she does not react to her friend immediately. She allows herself to think about the way it makes her feel before saying anything. When is this helpful? Is that ever not helpful?
5. We see examples of individuality and Bellen lovingly recognizing others' unique attributes while not playing down or up her own importance.
6. Show the pictures at the end of Bellen and go back to the front and read the letter from Bellen from the beginning of the book.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

K-2

Possible Questions:

1. What stood out to you most in this book?
2. When does Bellen feel excluded?
3. Why did her friends and teacher not realize this?
4. Who does she go to when she has a question after school?
5. Who can you go to when you have a question about something that happens at school?
6. What does Bellen say when asked for the skin-tone crayon after her conversation with her mother?
7. How does Bellen make a positive change in her school? Do you think it was easy or hard?

3-6

Possible Questions:

1. What was difficult about the positive way Bellen handled this situation at school?
2. What do you think her friend would have done if she'd handed her the brown crayon? Why was her response more positive?
3. How did staying calm and being patient with her classmates help her make a difference?
4. How would others have responded if she'd expressed frustration instead?
5. What is the biggest lesson Bellen is teaching her classmates?
6. Are there any areas within our school where you believe you could make a positive impact? What about outside of school and the broader community? State? Nation? World?

7. How can we apply Bellen's approach to skin color to other parts of our identities?
8. How can you be more inclusive in the language you choose?



ACTIVITY OPTIONS

K-6

Flip it Kind Role-playing

Materials: Scenarios with negative and positive response examples (Tip: Draw from scenarios you have heard from your child as examples)

1. Begin by discussing the importance of kindness and how it can positively impact relationships.
2. Explain the concept of responding to challenges with kindness instead of negativity.
3. Share a scenario involving a negative situation. Encourage students to brainstorm negative and positive responses.

Examples: A few friends are playing a game. You ask if you can join and they say, "no." *What is a negative response? (yell at them that they must play with you, or they're mean; tell them next time you're playing you won't let them play; run and go tell the yard duty person) What is a positive response? (ask them why; say ok, I'm going to go play tag if you want to do that after; tell them that makes you sad, but you hope you can play next time).*

At lunch you see someone littering. *What is a negative response? (tell on them, yell at them that they are destroying the Earth) What is a positive response? (pick it up and bring it to them to throw away; tell them they missed the trash can and encourage them to pick it up)*

4. Invite two students to the front of the room to act out the scenario. Have students use their ideas of ways to respond to the situation, first with a negative response and then with a positive one.
5. Continue to give students practice as a whole class acting out scenarios. Focus on the positive words and mindset in student responses.
6. Discuss the impact of different responses and the importance of choosing kindness.

When we respond with thought instead of frustration, people tend to listen better. If we think before we speak, everyone leaves the situation happier and with more understanding.

Differentiation:

- Younger Students: Focus on simple scenarios and use visual aids to support understanding.
- Older Students: Explore more complex scenarios and discuss the long-term consequences of different responses.

K-2

Human Rainbow

Materials: One long butcher paper and a piece of white paper per child, crayons.

Discuss with the students Bellen's chosen phrase "skin can be any number of beautiful colors." Tell them that by showing kindness and empathy for her classmates, Bellen didn't make them feel bad for hurting her feelings. When someone hurts our feelings we can assume they didn't mean to and respond like Bellen did. Just like with our colored water at the beginning of the lesson, Bellen influenced others, and spread knowledge and kindness. We have been influenced by her words and her experience!

1. Say, "Look around the room, we are all different in our appearances! From hair, eyes, height, to skin tone, and it's like a beautiful rainbow!" If we recognize and view our differences in positive ways, everyone can feel better about being themselves and more comfortable. "Let's all commit to calling all the skin tone crayons the color that they are."
2. Tell students we will collect all the skin tone colors and make a classroom rainbow together. "Each of you will make a heart on your paper in any beautiful skin tone and then we will place them all together on this big paper."
3. Make an example of a rainbow made of skin tone hearts to show them and encourage unique expression and positive discussion about the different colors. Note- if a child chooses something like blue or green you can tell them those are some of your favorite colors, but we are trying to focus on skin tone like the rainbow you showed them.
4. Tell them that we each are going to practice in our table groups calling the skin-color crayons the color they are. Give them the script that Bellen used with her classmates.
 - a. Say, "Can I have the skin color crayon?" Respond, "Which color do you mean, skin can be any number of beautiful colors!" Say, "I mean the _____ crayon." And ask each student to practice.
5. Each child will work on their heart and color it in at their desk. As they are working, walk around the room, and encourage the students.
6. Consider drawing a line for a rainbow on the paper for younger children to follow the arch as they complete their pieces. Have extra hearts in various skin tones on the big butcher paper as an example, and to fill in the variety of colors available to represent all skin tones.
7. Give an ending time and tell them they will each come up and tape their heart on the classroom paper with your help. As each child comes up, have the class say, "That is a beautiful color!" together.

Lift Our Voices Everywhere.

3-6

Materials: Paper for each student, crayons, or colored pencils

Discuss with students that Bellen didn't set out in 3rd grade to become a crayon activist. Something happened and it was an issue that she thought she could help with in some way. Read the sections at the end of the book to the students: "What you want to grow?" and "Lift Our Voices Everywhere."

Ask the students: Have you ever seen something in the world that you wished could be different? Something in your school, your community, or even the wider world? Just like Bellen in "Lift Our Voices Everywhere," you can be the change you want to see!

1. Explain that students will be working in groups to identify social issues and brainstorm solutions. Emphasize the importance of considering different perspectives and being respectful. This could be anything that concerns them, like pollution, bullying, or lack of access to education.
2. Divide students into small groups.
3. Ask each group to discuss issues they see in the world that need change.
4. Encourage students to write down one problem and explain why it's important to address.
5. Have whole groups rotate to different workstations as you instruct them.
6. Instruct students to examine the problems identified by other groups.
7. At each station, brainstorm one solution or method for addressing the problem. Write down group idea on their page.
8. Have students return to their original workstations and read what others wrote as ideas for solutions to the problem. Facilitate a discussion about the solutions suggested by other groups. Encourage students to share their thoughts and insights.

(Optional before or after the activity): Watch the video of Bellen and her mother [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TUEa_KdfKLQ]. See how even a young person can take action to make a difference!



CLOSING

What a wonderful example Bellen was for positive change! We are going to close with a mindfulness activity. I am going to pose some questions and say phrases that I hope will remind you of what you have learned.

Close your eyes and listen quietly as I speak.

- How was Bellen a positive example to her peers? Her teachers? Her family?
- I want you to think about a small change you could make to help others feel more comfortable in this classroom and beyond.
- Think about how others might feel if you made this small change. Would you be an example to others?
- We already have begun making changes, calling all the skin tone crayons their actual color name, but what else can you do?
- We hope you know and understand your power is within you and you can reach so many people with your kindness and voice.
- Thank you for letting me join you today! I know I have areas I can improve, and I look forward to working on those until I see you next time.



SCHOOL WIDE EXTENSIONS

Teaching for Change

As your guide, use the tagline: "Instead of asking kids what they want to be when they grow up, ask them what they want to change."- Bellen

This can be an excellent community building activity with the teachers reflecting on and sharing the love they have for their profession and their school community. It gives the students an opportunity to hear from their teachers, past, present, and future.

- Email and ask each staff member to complete the phrase- "I became a teacher because I wanted to change _____."
- Create a nice visual in a main area of the school that is seen often by the student body and post their completed phrases.
- Invite a few teachers each week or month to share their "why" on morning announcements or at a school assembly.
- Students will hear these words from the educators all around them and know they are there for more than just a job. They may connect with the words from one teacher they didn't even know existed on campus, and feel seen, supported, and loved even if they don't choose to approach that teacher.

For children, knowing there are adults who care about them at school and beyond is a researched marker for success. Imagine if students were able to see and hear from the teachers from all over the school about why they love teaching so much. This would give the opportunity for trust and respect to grow and for students to feel deeper personal connections to the adults on campus with them every day.

All are Beautiful

Materials: Poster board for each classroom, variety of skin tone pencils, crayons, or markers.

All skin tones are beautiful, and we are lucky to have so many in our schools. Each student will get to choose a color to represent them in a large-scale classroom coloring page.

- As a class, choose a drawing- it can be a scene, a geometric design, or just a grid of squares, circles, or hearts.
- Have each class vote on their own. Draw the picture on their poster board for younger students or have the older students do it for themselves.
- Each student will then take a turn adding their chosen color onto the drawing.
- Encourage each child to color one shape. Encourage them to choose a skin tone.
 - If a student wants to choose a color that is not a skin tone, remind them of the story and how Bellen stood up for what others were generalizing as one understood "skin-tone" for everyone, and here is a great opportunity to show our beautiful diversity.
- On the outside of each classroom door students will post their shared coloring page to show off the colors in the school.
- Students will get the chance to see the creativity of others as well as the colors of the school showcased in a beautiful way.