

The Girl Who Saved One

LITTLE GUIDING LIGHT BOOKS

About the Book

Synopsis, themes & key message

What is this book about?

There are so many problems children see in the world it is easy to feel small. Too small to matter. Too small to help. But DD doesn't see it that way. She finds a way to roll up her sleeves and make a difference in one life right in front of her. Through DD's story young readers learn a truth that can shape how they move through the world. You don't have to fix everything. You just have to care enough to do something. And sometimes, saving one is the bravest, most powerful thing a person can do.

CORE THEME

Courage & Compassion

SEL FOCUS

Self-Awareness & Self-Management

GRADE BAND

PreK - Grade 6

CASEL SEL Framework Alignment

Standards-based connections for school adoption

CASEL COMPETENCY

Self-Awareness

Encourages children to notice their own emotional response to seeing someone in need.

CASEL COMPETENCY

Self-Management

Models choosing action over helplessness when problems feel too big.

CASEL COMPETENCY

Relationship Skills

Demonstrates care, kindness, and responsibility toward others in the community.

CASEL COMPETENCY

Responsible Decision-Making

Show that choosing to help, even in a small way, is a meaningful and ethical choice.

Before Reading

Activating prior knowledge and building curiosity

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Look at the cover. What do you notice about the girl? What might she be doing?
- 2 The title says, "The Girl Who Saved One." Saved one what? What do you think this book is about?
- 3 Have you ever helped someone, even in a small way? How did it feel?
- 4 What does compassion mean to you? Can you show it without saying a word?

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

The Kindness Ripple

Teacher, draw a bulls eye made up of three circles on the board.

Point to the center circle. Ask: "Who can tell me about a time someone was kind to you?" Write one student's answer in the center.

Point to the middle circle. Ask: "How did that kindness make you feel?" Write the response around the first.

Point to the outer circle. Ask: "Did that feeling make you want to be kind to someone else?" Write those answers in the biggest ring.

Tell students: "Look how one small act of kindness created all this. Let's see if the girl in our story discovers the same thing."

Revisit the Kindness Ripple AFTER reading.

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Learning Objectives

What students will know, feel, and be able to do

COMPASSION

- Kindness starts with noticing someone needs help
- You don't need to fix everything to make a difference
- One small act can change the whole situation

EMPATHY

- Understand how others feel
- Connecting to DD's choice to help when others passed by
- Inspired to look for the "one" they can help

DO

- Identify one way to show kindness this week
- Practice stopping, and noticing, and responding to someone in need
- Reflect on how it feels to help

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Vocabulary & Key Concepts

Pre-reading and during-reading word work

INTRODUCE BEFORE READING

Rescue

To help someone or something out of danger or trouble.

Courage

The ability to do something that frightens you; choosing to act in spite of fear.

Brave

Ready to face and endure danger or pain; showing courage.

Matter

To be important, to make a difference

Choice

An act of picking one option from a set of possibilities; a decision.

Power

The ability or capacity to direct or influence your own thoughts and actions.

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During Reading

Think-alouds, stop and notice moments

PAUSE & ASK

When students first see the size of the problem:

“How would you feel if you saw this? What would you want to do?”

When others just keep yelling:

“What choices does the characters yelling have right now? Why do you think they keep yelling?”

When the character decides to act:

“Why do you think the character chose to act and roll up here sleeves with her brother?”

After DD saves one rab:

“Did DD fix the whole problem? Do you think her single act to throw the horseshoe crab in the water will have a ripple effect?”

TEACHER THINK-ALOUD PROMPTS

Model for Students

I notice the character's are yelling a lot. Do you have things that upset you that you see happen and it makes you want to yell?

I notice everyone is yelling about the crabs. That makes me feel sad and a little helpless. I wonder if DD feels that way too.

Dd didn't try to save them all, she just helped the one right in front of her. Sometimes that's all it takes.

I'm going to remember this: I don't have to fix everything. But if something really upsets me I can find a way to make a real difference in just one small act of kindness.

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After Reading

Deepening comprehension and personal connection

RECALL

What happened in the story?
What were two things DD was upset with?
What did the character decide to do?

INTERPRET

Why do you think the author wrote this book?
What is the most important message?
How is the character different at the end?

CONNECT

When have YOU done something to make a difference?
Who in your life likes to yell about big problems?
What would you tell a friend who is upset about a problem they see that seems too big.

CREATE

Draw a picture of a crab.
Write: 'I can save one...'
Create a class Making A Difference Wall with big problems and small actions that can make a difference.

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Writing Extension Activities

Cross-curricular literacy connections

PreK-K

Draw Your Kind

Students draw someone who needs help on one side, and draw themselves helping that person on the other side.

Grades 1-2

Sentence Starters

Complete the prompts: "I saw someone who needed help when... and I showed kindness by....and Next time someone is complaint about a problem that looks to big I will tell them..."

Grades 3-4

Letter to the Character

Write a friendly letter to the main character. Include: what you admire, a time you felt the same way, and one idea for how your class could "save one" together.

Grades 5-6

Reflective Journal

Describe a time you saw a problem that felt too big. What did you do, what could you have done? After reading DD's story, what does saving one mean to you? How could that change the way you act this week?

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SEL Classroom Activities

Hands-on experiences to build courage and self-awareness

1

Feelings Check-In

Use an emotion chart or wheel daily. Ask students to name their feeling if they made a difference in "one" and rate its intensity 1-5. Connect to the book: how good does it feel to make a difference.

2

Compassion Talk Stems

Post sentence stems: "I noticed someone needed help when..." and "One small thing I can do is..."

3

Kindness Wall

Create a class display where students post kind acts they did or received on heart shaped cutouts. Show that making a difference comes in all sizes.

4

Empathy Breathing

Teach a calm-down technique: breathe in for 4 counts, hold for 2, out for 6. Practice together as a class tool for managing when something feels too big upsets them. To not yell about it, breath through it and find a way to act calm and help.

5

Role Play Scenarios

Give pairs a scenario (someone sitting alone at lunch, a classmate dropped their books). Practice asking: "Are you ok? Can I Help?" Then act it out.

6

Compassion Mentor Text

Compare with another read-aloud featuring a compassionate character. Use a T-chart: How is the problem the same or different? What did each character choose to do?

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Family Connection

Extending the conversation beyond the classroom

Research shows that SEL skills are strengthened when families and schools work together. Use these prompts and activities to bridge the conversation at home.

CONVERSATION STARTERS FOR HOME

- Ask your child: What was the character scared of? What did they do?
- Tell me about a time YOU did something scared.
- What is one thing you would like to be brave enough to try?
- How can our family cheer each other on when we are scared?

TAKE-HOME ACTIVITY

The Brave Jar

Decorate a jar together as a family.

Each time a family member does something scary -- big or small -- write it on a slip of paper and add it to the jar.

At dinner once a week, take turns reading slips and celebrating each other's bravery.

Watch the jar fill up over the school year!

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Assessment & Reflection Ideas

Documenting growth in SEL competencies

Informal Assessment

- 1 Thumbs Up/Down/Sideways: Did DD make a compassionate choice? Would you have done the same
- 2 Exit ticket: Name one feeling from the book and one kind action.
- 3 Partner share: Tell your neighbor one thing you do to make a difference.
- 4 Class discussion observation checklist (teacher-facing).

Formal Assessment

- 1 Written response: The character in this story taught me that one act of kindness can ... (2-3 sentences minimum).
- 2 Illustrated kindness-moment booklet with captions.
- 3 Rubric-based journal entry scored on depth, personal connection, and vocabulary.
- 4 Pre/post self-assessment: Rate how often you see a way to help 1-5 and explain why.

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About the Author & Little Guiding Light Books

Little Guiding Light Books is an independent children's book imprint dedicated to Social-Emotional Learning for PreK through Grade 6. All books are CASEL-aligned with accompanying Teacher's Guides.

"All of the books share a common thread -- empowering kids to understand that they hold the power to shape their own thoughts, control their own actions, and make their own choices. Each story is a step toward building stronger mental health."

WEBSITE

LittleGuidingLightBooks.com

EMAIL

danny@littleguidinglightbooks.com

INSTAGRAM

@littleguidinglightbooks