

Create Super Readers With the 7 Strengths Model

Kids thrive in a community where they are valued and have an important role to play. The tips below provide ideas for building a virtual community of super readers—using the 7 Strengths Model, a social-emotional learning framework that builds on what students *can* do. When children:

- feel a sense of belonging in a community of readers
- satisfy curiosity through literature and inquiry
- form meaningful friendships around storytelling
- learn kindness
- develop confidence and courage
- have hope

they reach their “super reader” potential.

If your students have a device of their own:

- Download and read the Family Guide we’ve posted to learn about the 7 Strengths Model and ways families can support the work you will be doing in your virtual classroom.
- Pre-record or livestream a video that introduces the 7 Strengths to students and tell them that you’ll focus on one or two of them a week to strengthen your community of super readers. Provide examples of students embodying each of the 7 Strengths. If you are livestreaming, invite students to share an example of a way they’ve embodied a strength recently (e.g., Kindness: “I read my favorite picture book to my younger sister when she couldn’t fall asleep”).
- Each week, select reading-based activities that will appeal to your students. Here are some ideas:

Belonging: Identifying as a valued, represented member of a larger community

- **Book Show:** Have students work together to create a slideshow that celebrates books—and reading books—that focus on a sense of belonging.
- **#Belonging:** Create a class or family Twitter account, and invite students to work together to create hashtag campaigns that promote belonging and connect to books they’ve read and/or you’ve read to them.
- **Review It–Share It:** Gather ideas for books about belonging (e.g., anti-bullying, civic groups) to read and discuss. In a shared document, have students add their ideas, reflections, and comments.

Curiosity: Fostering a willingness to explore new territories and test new theories

- **Gaining Access:** Teach students how to use the online resources of public libraries and universities for their assignments that require research.
- **Digital Hunt:** Work with students to use online search tools to discover answers to questions they want to explore. Show them how to refine search phrases to optimize their results.
- **Voice My Wonder:** Using a voice-recording app, encourage students to log their wonderings about a book or article they're reading, such as a question about a nonfiction topic or about what might happen next in a novel or short story. Post the questions and invite conversations among readers.

Friendship: Having close, trusting relationships and personal connections to others—learning to act in positive, productive ways

- **Book Clubs:** Arrange book club chats on the shared-learning platform for students who are reading the same book or article, or reading the same genre.
- **My Mailbox:** Provide students with some pointers on thoughtful note writing (e.g., asking questions about the recipient, sharing personal experiences and observations). Help students craft e-messages (using email or other messaging apps) to friends and family members about favorite books or other topics that matter to them.
- **Digital Pals:** Arrange for students in your class to be digital pals with students in a different state or country. Use video calls to facilitate conversations, encouraging students to share favorite articles they may have read from websites such as [Scholastic.com/learnathome](https://www.scholastic.com/learnathome).

Kindness: Being compassionate toward others, expressing tenderness that has an impact near and far

- **Kindness Scrapbook:** Have students photograph examples of kindness they see at home or in their neighborhood, or screen-capture examples from online sources, and write short captions. Assemble the work in a slideshow or shared document. Circulate the final piece for the class to read and enjoy.
- **Be Kind! Blog:** Work with students to create a blog that challenges unkind behavior, such as bullying or animal neglect. In their posts, have them share ideas for countering the behavior that they've learned in life and from literature (e.g., being inclusive in conversations and games or reporting threatening behavior to a trusted source).

- Kindness in the World: Guide students to search for and read about organizations that promote kindness in the community and the world. Consider ways to support those organizations as a class (writing about their work, hosting an online fundraiser).

Confidence: Thinking independently and expressing ideas with assurance

- Confident Character Notes: Read aloud a book that contains a character that exhibits confidence (e.g., *Bobby the Brave: Sometimes* by Lisa Yee). When you finish, ask students, “How did this character show confidence in the story? Do you think it’s important to have confidence? Why or why not?” Have students respond in a livestream session or post their responses online.
- What I Know Video: Have students do one-minute livestream presentations or record short videos to share with their classmates, in which they tell five fascinating facts about a topic they’re expert in. Encourage them to be confident!
- Take 2 to Improve: Invite students to videotape themselves practicing a class presentation they’ll livestream or eventually post. Be sure they review what they record before going public. Practicing builds confidence!

Courage: Having the strength to do something you know is right, even though it may be difficult

- Courageous Reader Badges: Create a digital badge—perhaps an emoji or icon—that you can easily paste into your responses to students’ reading journals. Use the badge when a student takes a positive step as a reader.
- Be Courageous! News Bank: Have students find examples of everyday courageous acts, at online news sources. Create a space for them to post links, along with notes about why they think the acts are courageous, on the shared learning platform for inspiration.
- For the Public Good: Have students research ways to be courageous safely during a pandemic and create one-minute public service announcements (PSAs). Share the PSAs on the school’s website or other shared digital space.

Hope: Thinking optimistically and believing that today’s efforts will produce good things in the future for yourself and the world

- Goal PicCollage: Discuss how goal-setting can put hope into action. Invite students to set reading goals and create digital posters featuring them. Have them write their goals in a shared document and

add images as reminders of them. Have them list steps they will take to achieve their goals, and then check off or comment on each step as students accomplish it.

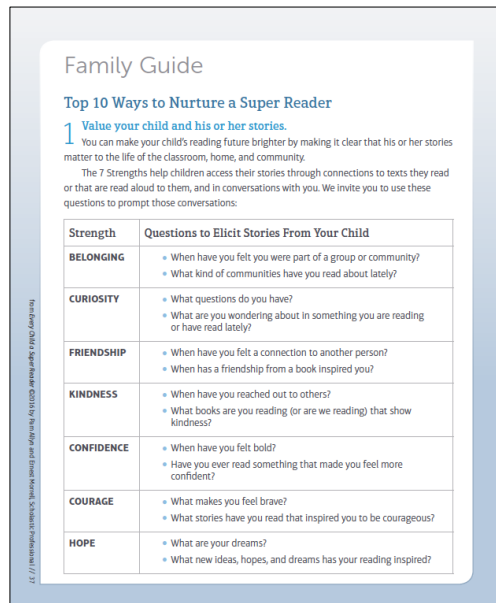
- Hope Poll: In a shared document or in a livestream brainstorm, have the class generate a list of main characters from read-alouds you've shared. Using a free online survey tool, ask students to rank those characters' hopefulness on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the most hopeful, and share the results. Some survey tools can generate a class graph, or you might have each student create a graph from his or her own data.
- Class Affirmations: In your daily post, video, or livestream, feature affirmations students have written, read, or heard from family members or friends. Encourage students to submit their affirmations the day before you present them.
- As you explore each of the 7 Strengths with students, send their caregivers the Family Guide PDF for the focus strength and encourage students to explain to family members how that strength has helped them. Invite caregivers to share how their family is practicing the focus strength by sending you a text, email, or photo, or by posting a note or photo to the shared learning site.

If your students share a device at home:

Follow the same steps and suggestions as above, but pre-record activity introductions and have students post their work to a shared learning site on their own time.

If your students have limited or no online access:

If you are creating packets of materials to send home, consider including the downloadable Family Guide or collecting activities from the downloadable 7 Strengths Guides that make sense for your students and their families.



Family Guide

Top 10 Ways to Nurture a Super Reader

1 Value your child and his or her stories.
 You can make your child's reading future brighter by making it clear that his or her stories matter to the life of the classroom, home, and community.
 The 7 Strengths help children access their stories through connections to texts they read or that are read aloud to them, and in conversations with you. We invite you to use these questions to prompt those conversations:

Strength	Questions to Elicit Stories From Your Child
BELONGING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When have you felt you were part of a group or community? • What kind of communities have you read about lately?
CURIOSITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What questions do you have? • What are you wondering about in something you are reading or have read lately?
FRIENDSHIP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When have you felt a connection to another person? • When has a friendship from a book inspired you?
KINDNESS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When have you reached out to others? • What books are you reading (or are we reading) that show kindness?
CONFIDENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When have you felt bold? • Have you ever read something that made you feel more confident?
COURAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes you feel brave? • What stories have you read that inspired you to be courageous?
HOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your dreams? • What new ideas, hopes, and dreams has your reading inspired?