



CIRCLE OF RESPECT

BOOK CLUB TEACHING TIPS

Pre-reading questions for students:

- What do you think the book will be about, judging from its cover and title?
- What do you already know about this topic?
- What have you personally experienced or observed about this topic?

Pre-reading activities:

Individual or group brainstorming: Students can list words or phrases that they think might be important in this book.

Collaborative writing: In groups of four or five, each student can write one sentence that he or she thinks summarizes what the book will be about. Students can peer-edit one another's sentences.

Post-reading questions:

- Did the book turn out to be about what you thought it would be about? In what ways did it surprise you?
- Which characters did you like best? Least? Which characters changed in significant ways during the story?
- How did the book demonstrate the problem of bullying? How did it demonstrate the solution of respect?
- What do you know now that you did not know before reading this book?

Post-reading activities:

Students can act out scenes from the book, with assigned parts. This can be done either extemporaneously or with a pre-written script, which groups of students can produce.

Students can act out scenes but give them alternate endings. They can write an alternate ending for the book itself, and act out that ending.

Students can write a plot summary of a possible sequel to the book: What might have happened next in the lives of the major characters?

Teachers should make available to students the author interviews or podcasts that accompany the book. Ask students to record in their journals or through group writing the points from the supplementary material that make the greatest impression on them.

Students can draft a letter to the author. One or two students can be assigned to write the letter out of class, and then the entire group can suggest rewordings, additions, or deletions. The letter could be sent; authors tend to be very eager to respond to letters from young readers, and students tend to be thrilled to receive such responses.

Beyond the School Year:

The Circle of Respect Book Club is in session year round, summer months included. That means it provides one further benefit: It helps plug the “brain drain” that often occurs even among strong students during summer vacation. Teachers can encourage students to read books from the list over the summer, and can even coordinate with their students’ next-year teachers on this—so the flow of information goes uninterrupted, and the anti-bullying message keeps being reinforced.

See the Circle of Respect Book Club:

<http://www.ncpc.org/programs/circle-of-respect/get-involved/book-club>