



What do we mean by REAL Character Development?

At its core, REAL is about delivering a Character Development Program that is:

- **Relevant:** Relatable to the needs of today’s students, educators, and parents. We focus on family values such as honesty and hard work while also teaching about the real-world challenges that students will face such as stress management, relationship building, and future readiness.
- **Empowering for Educators and Parents:** Our program is based on educational transparency. We want all students, educators and parents to be involved in the learning process. Offering practical, hands-on activities that students can immediately apply in their lives.
- **Actionable Evidence:** Our program is tried and true tested by third-party experts and schools, grounded in research and best practices, ensuring that every strategy, activity, and lesson plan you implement is backed by scientific data and proven effective.
- **Lasting:** REAL Skills Building is not just a one-time intervention but a foundation that students build on over time, supporting their growth throughout their education and beyond.

Why “REAL Character Development = REAL Results” Matters:

Our slogan highlights that our true, high-quality program, when implemented thoughtfully and consistently, has the power to produce measurable and transformative results. It reinforces your school’s commitment to delivering character development programs that make a significant and lasting difference for students and educators alike.

By embracing **REAL**, your school ensures that you provide the tools and strategies necessary to foster growth, ultimately leading to **REAL results**—not just in the classroom but in students’ lives.



How Does Storytelling Help Students Learn?

The Power of Stories in Education

Literature serves as a powerful tool in teaching Character Development because it immerses students in narratives that mirror the complexities of human emotions, relationships, and choices. Stories allow children to explore diverse perspectives and experiences, often different from their own, fostering empathy and social awareness. By stepping into the shoes of a character, students can understand emotions, motivations, and the consequences of actions in a safe and engaging way. This helps them develop emotional vocabulary and recognition, key components of self-awareness and emotional regulation.

Connecting Emotional Concepts to Real-Life Scenarios

Through literature, abstract Character Development concepts such as self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making become tangible and relatable. Characters in stories face challenges and make decisions that resonate with students, providing natural opportunities for reflection and discussion. For example, when a character learns to navigate conflict or express gratitude, students can analyze the choices made and consider how they might handle similar situations. This connection between literature and real life deepens students' understanding of these principles and enhances their ability to apply these skills in their own lives.

Promoting Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving

Reading literature also cultivates critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are central to Character Development. As students analyze a story's plot, characters, and conflicts, they learn to evaluate different perspectives and consider multiple solutions to problems. Literature invites them to reflect on ethical dilemmas, weigh the consequences of decisions, and practice perspective-taking. These activities align seamlessly with the program objectives, helping students build the cognitive and emotional skills that are based in core values. By integrating literature into the program instruction, educators not only enrich students' academic learning but also empower them to thrive.

Emozi®'s Story-Based Approach

The Emozi® program uniquely integrates literature into character development instruction by using engaging, developmentally appropriate stories featuring beloved characters like Ollie the Owl, Benny the Bear, Harriet the Hare, Betty the Beaver, Sammy the Squirrel, and Buzz the



Bee. In preschool and kindergarten, short, relatable tales introduce young learners to foundational character strength concepts through the adventures of these animal friends. For grades 1 and 2, the same characters continue to guide students through more complex social-emotional challenges, helping them develop skills like sharing, empathy, and problem-solving. By grade 3, Emozi introduces small chapter books featuring Ollie and his friends as they navigate relatable situations that reflect students' growing emotional and social experiences. In grades 4 and 5, the program evolves into a novel-per-grade format, with each lesson tied to a specific chapter. These novels provide deeper engagement and allow students to explore SEL topics like ethical decision-making, conflict resolution, and self-awareness in greater depth. By following Ollie and his friends' journeys, students connect emotionally with the characters, making Character Development concepts more meaningful and impactful.

Program Components:

Each Emozi® classroom implementation package includes the following materials:

- Teacher Guide
- Activities and Worksheets
- Posters for enhanced implementation





Grade 4 Lesson Preview: Strengths

Lesson Objective: Students will explore their personal strengths, understand how these strengths help them in learning and friendships, and reflect on how to use their strengths effectively in different situations.

Materials Needed:



- The chapter "Discovering Our Strengths"
- Coloring sheets for the "Superpower Strengths Shield" Activity
- Crayons, markers
- Parent Home Connection Letter

Introduction to the Topic (10 minutes)

Greeting Outline:

- Welcome the children.
- Briefly discuss what strengths are.
- Ask some questions to engage the students and introduce the topic.

Greeting Teacher Script

1. Warm Welcome and Opening Discussion

- "Good morning, class! Today we're going to talk about something special—our personal strengths. Strengths are the qualities that make us unique and help us succeed. Each of us has strengths that help us in our friendships, learning, and problem-solving. We're going to read a story about Ollie and his friends as they discover their strengths, and afterward, we'll talk about your own strengths and how they can help you."



2. Engaging Questions

- Can anyone share what they think a "strength" is?
- Why do you think it's important to know your strengths?
- Do you think knowing your strengths can help you make good choices?

Read the Chapter (15 minutes)

1. Story Time Outline:



- Read the chapter "Discovering Our Strengths" aloud to the Class.
- Pause at key moments to engage students and make sure they are following the story.
- Reflect on the chapter once finished and ask a few follow up questions

Story Time Teacher Script:

1. Prepare the Children for the Story:

- "We're going to read a story called *Discovering Our Strengths*. During the story I will stop to ask you a few questions."
- (Read the chapter aloud, using an expressive voice. Pause occasionally to ask questions like the ones provided below.)

2. Read the Chapter with Emphasis on Key Moments:

- **While reading**, pause during key moments.
- **Ask Questions:**
 - What does Ms. Sanchez mean by personal strengths being like superpowers?
 - How does Harriet use her energy as a strength?
 - Why is Benny's ability to support others an important strength?
 - What strength does Buzz share? How does his creativity help the group?
 - Why does Ollie believe planning and thinking things through is his strength?



- What does Sammy’s strength of listening and understanding show about him?
- How does Betty’s problem-solving ability help the group?
- How do the friends feel when they discover their strengths?
- What does Ms. Sanchez mean when she says that strengths can sometimes overwhelm us?
- How can the friends learn to use their strengths wisely?



Discovering our Strengths

It was the first day of fourth grade, and Ollie, Harriet, Benny, Sammy, Buzz, and Betty were all feeling excited and a little nervous as they walked into their new classroom. The room was filled with bright posters, a class library, and a big whiteboard with "Welcome, Fourth Graders!" written in colorful letters.

The friends had been together since third grade, and while they still loved playing games and going on adventures, they knew that this year would be different. They felt a little older, a little wiser, and ready to take on bigger challenges. Their new teacher, Ms. Sanchez, smiled warmly as the class settled in.

"Welcome, everyone!" Ms. Sanchez said cheerfully. "Today, we're going to do something special. I want each of you to think about a personal strength you have—something that makes you unique and helps you in your learning and friendships. This year, we're going to focus on discovering and using our strengths to solve problems and achieve our goals."

The class buzzed with excitement as students began talking about their strengths. Betty glanced around at her

friends. "What's a personal strength?" she asked, feeling curious.

Ms. Sanchez explained, "A personal strength is something you're naturally good at or something you've developed through practice. It's a part of who you are and can help you succeed. Some people are really good at helping others feel comfortable, while others might be great at figuring out tricky problems."

"Like superpowers?" Buzz buzzed excitedly.

Ms. Sanchez laughed softly. "Yes, Buzz! Exactly like superpowers, except these powers come from inside you. They help you think, act, and feel in ways that make you and others around you stronger."

The friends exchanged thoughtful looks. They had never really thought about their own strengths before.

Harriet, always the fastest and most active of the group, spoke up first. "I think my strength is my energy! I'm always up and ready for anything. I can keep going even when others get tired."

"That's true," Ollie agreed, nodding. "And you're great at encouraging everyone to keep going, even when things get tough."



Ms. Sanchez smiled. “That’s a wonderful strength, Harriet. Your energy helps you and those around you stay motivated.”

Benny, who was strong and dependable, thought for a moment. “I think my strength is that I’m good at supporting others. I like helping carry things or organizing stuff so that everything runs smoothly.”

“That’s definitely one of your strengths, Benny,” Betty agreed. “You’re always there when we need a hand.”

“Your strength helps you be a reliable friend and leader,” Ms. Sanchez added.

Buzz buzzed around, thinking about his own strength. “I think mine is my creativity! I love coming up with new ideas and finding new ways to look at things.”

“Yes!” Sammy nodded eagerly. “Buzz, you always have a fun idea to try, even when the rest of us are stuck.”

“Creativity is a powerful strength,” Ms. Sanchez agreed. “It helps you and your friends think outside the box and solve problems in new ways.”

Ollie, the thoughtful one, spoke next. “I think my strength is that I like to plan and think things through. I like coming up with strategies when we play games or work on projects.”

“Absolutely, Ollie,” Harriet said. “You help us figure out the best way to do things.”

“Your strength helps you stay calm in tricky situations and see things clearly,” Ms.

Sanchez said with a smile.

Sammy shifted in his seat, considering. “I guess my strength is that I’m good at listening and understanding how people feel. I notice when my friends are upset, and I try to help.”

“That’s so true, Sammy!” Betty said. “You always know just what to say to make us feel better.”

“Empathy is an important strength,” Ms. Sanchez said softly. “It helps you connect with others and build strong relationships.”

Finally, Betty thought about her own strength. “I think I’m good at solving problems. I like figuring out how to fix things when they’re broken, like puzzles or when we build something.”

“That’s a great strength, Betty,” Benny said. “You always come up with solutions that we didn’t even think of.”

“Your problem-solving skills make you a great thinker and builder,” Ms. Sanchez added.

As each friend shared their strength, they felt a sense of pride. It felt good to focus on what made them unique and to hear their friends’ appreciation for their abilities. But there was something else Ms. Sanchez wanted them to understand.



“Now that you know your strengths, there’s one more thing I want to share,” Ms. Sanchez said. “Sometimes, your brain can predict how you’ll react to situations based on these strengths. For example, Harriet’s energy might help her stay positive, but if she’s not careful, it could also make her rush into things too quickly. And Benny’s supportiveness might mean he takes on too much sometimes. The goal is to use your strengths to help you succeed without letting them overwhelm you.”

The friends nodded, thinking about how their strengths sometimes got them into tricky situations. Harriet remembered a time when she’d run ahead of the group without thinking, and Buzz thought about a moment when his wild ideas made things more confusing.

“So, part of having a growth mindset,” Ms. Sanchez continued, “is using your strengths wisely and recognizing when you might

need to slow down, ask for help, or think things through.”

“That makes sense,” Ollie said thoughtfully. “It’s like having a superpower that you need to learn to control.”

“Yes, exactly!” Ms. Sanchez smiled. “This year, we’re going to work on understanding our strengths and using them to grow and become better problem-solvers.”

As the friends left class that day, they felt more aware of what made them special. They also realized that just like superheroes, they needed to learn to use their strengths in ways that helped, rather than hurt. Each of them had something unique to offer, and they were excited to see how they could work together to tackle new challenges.

From that day on, Betty, Ollie, Harriet, Buzz, Sammy, and Benny made a promise to themselves and each other: to recognize and use their strengths to face whatever came their way, helping each other grow and become even stronger as friends.



3. Post-Chapter Teacher Script

- “Wow, what a great chapter! It was so interesting to learn about the character strengths of Ollie, Harriet, Benny, Sammy, Buzz, and Betty. In our next activity, we will begin to learn about our own character strengths!”

4. Post-Book Questions

These questions encourage children to think deeply about what they listened to and their own character strengths.

- What strength do you think you have?
- How does your strength help you in school or with your friends?
- Can you think of a time when you used your strength to solve a problem?
- How do you feel when others notice your strengths?
- Have you ever been in a situation where your strength created a challenge?
- Why is it important to learn to control your strengths, like superheroes with their powers?
- How can a growth mindset help you use your strengths effectively?
- What can you do when your strength isn't enough, and you need help?
- How can your strengths work together with your friends' strengths?
- How can we encourage each other to use our strengths in positive ways?

Do an Activity (20 minutes)

1. Superpower Strengths Shield

- Pass out paper shield templates to each student.
- Ask students to write their names in the middle of the shield and their personal strengths underneath their names.
- Let students decorate their shields to represent their strength using markers, crayons, and decorations.
- After they're done, students can share their shields with the class, explaining what strength they chose and how it helps them.



Activity 1: Superpower Strengths Shield



1. Introduce the Activity

- “Now that we’ve talked about strengths, we’re going to create something fun—a Superpower Strengths Shield! On your shield, I want you to write your name and draw a strength you believe makes you special. Then, decorate your shield with colors, designs, and anything else that shows how proud you are of your strength.”

2. Show and Tell

- “Okay, now let’s each turn to someone sitting next to us and show them our shields! Talk about what your strength is and why you are proud of it.”

3. Conclusion:

- “That was so much fun! I’m proud of you all. Let’s give ourselves a big round of applause for being good sports today and for making such fantastic shields!” (Lead the children in a round of applause to celebrate their hard work and positive behavior.)

Wrap Up the Lesson (5 minutes)

Review and Reflection Overview:

- Ask the children to reflect on the following questions below.
- Conclude with Positive Reinforcement.
- Pass out the Home Connection letters.

Review and Reflection Teacher Script

1. Gather in a Circle for Reflection:

- “Now let’s do some reflection questions to end this lesson.”
 - How do you feel now that you’ve identified your strength?
 - How will your strength help you in school this year?
 - How can you use your strength to help others?

2. Conclude with Positive Reinforcement:



- "You all did an amazing job identifying and sharing your strengths today. Remember, each of you has a unique strength that makes you special, just like the characters in the story. As we move through the year, we're going to continue exploring how we can use our strengths to solve problems and help each other. And don't forget, even superheroes sometimes need to learn how to control their powers!"

Parent Letter

Sending Information Home:

- Provide each child with a letter to take home to their parents explaining the lesson.
 - "Before we say goodbye, I have something special for you to take home to your parents. It's a letter that explains what we learned today about being a good sport. You can share it with your parents and talk about how you can practice being a good sport at home too!" (Hand out the parent letters to each child.)
- Include the story summary, the importance of knowing when to seek help, and how parents can reinforce these concepts at home.



Dear Caregiver,

Today in class, we began a new lesson about discovering personal strengths. We read a chapter from the book *Ollie's Superpower Squad: Fourth Grade Challenges*, where the characters identified the strengths that make them unique. Your student reflected on their own strengths and created a "Superpower Strengths Shield" to celebrate what makes them special. This lesson plan focuses on helping students discover their strengths, reflect on how they can use them effectively, and recognize the importance of controlling their strengths for personal growth. Through discussion and creative expression, students will gain a deeper understanding of their own abilities and how they contribute to their learning and relationships.

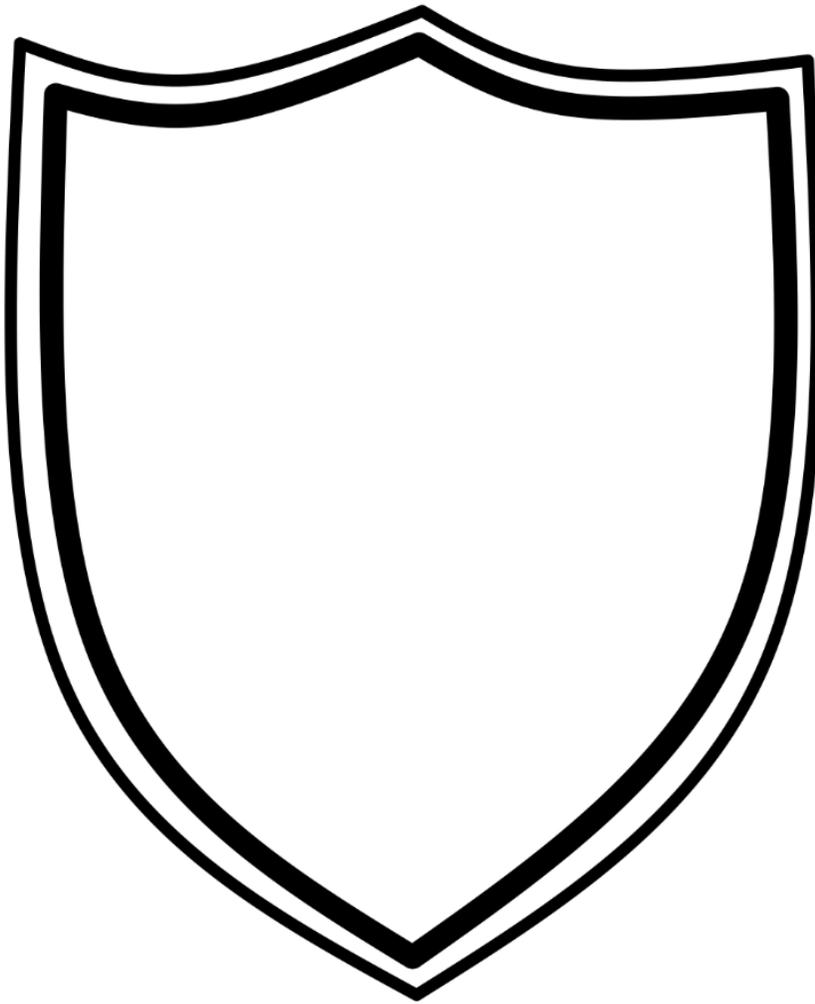
At home, you might want to ask your child about the strength they chose and how it helps them at school and with their friends. Encouraging your child to recognize and use their strengths is a great way to help them build confidence and a positive mindset.

We look forward to continuing to explore how our strengths can help us grow and succeed this school year.

Sincerely,



My Superpower Strengths Shield



©2024 Anna-Lisa Mackey, M.Ed., All rights reserved.



©2025 Anna-Lisa Mackey, M.Ed., All rights reserved.