

## Instructor Resource Guide: Inspirational Stories

The following activities and resources were selected to support classroom instruction and family literacy engagement. In addition to these instructor resources, each book in the collection has three short engagement activities for adults and families.

### Suggestions for Using the Collection and Activities

- ◆ Explore the books in the *Inspirational Stories* collection by clicking on the book titles in the table below.
- ◆ Notice that the books in the collection provide text across a span of reading levels for adults and include books that are engaging for children and families to read together.
- ◆ Access the short, guided activities for each book that offer suggestions for both instructors and families. You may access the activities by clicking on the book titles in the table below. The activities are attached to each book.
- ◆ Allow learners individual time to access the application and explore the collection and guided activities.
- ◆ If using the reading collection for the first time, model how the age and language filters work in the application, and how to locate the search function, so books can be easily found.
- ◆ Decide how you will interact with the topic and curated text collection. This resource guide has suggestions to support in-person instruction and offers online resources for instructors and family engagement. Consider using the materials as starting points for larger units or creative activities to engage with topics and texts.
- ◆ Use this collection and guide to help develop and foster a reading life for your learners and their families!

Engaging Books for Adults		
Book Title	Author	Lexile Reading Level
<i>Mr. Reed Lives for One More Day</i>	Michelle Garcia	410-600
<i>Mr. Reed Lives for a Day</i>	Michelle Garcia	610-800
<i>News for You: Europe's Space Agency Welcomes First Parastronaut</i>	New Readers Press (ProLiteracy)	610-800

<i>News for You: La agencia espacial de Europa da la bienvenida al primer parastronauta</i>	New Readers Press (ProLiteracy)	610-800
<b>Engaging Books for Adults and Children</b>		
<i>¿Qué es la paz?</i>	John Lasack	210-400
<i>Serena Williams: Game, Set, and Match</i>	Alan Trussell-Cullen	420-650
<i>Crossing Bok Chitto: A Choctaw Tale of Friendship &amp; Freedom</i>	Tim Tingle	640
<i>She Was the First!</i>	Katheryn Russell-Brown	610-800
<i>Art for All</i>	Olivia Wood	610-800
<i>Arte para todos</i>	Olivia Wood	610-800

### Activities to Support Instruction

To explore this topic, consider how you will build anticipation, background knowledge, and schema for your learners about topics regarding *inspirational stories*. To do this, consider addressing the following questions with your learners:

- What does the term “inspiration” mean to you?
- What are some things that inspire you?
- Why do you think it’s important to read inspirational stories?
- How do you define an inspirational leader? What qualities do they have?

There are many ways to get your learners thinking, collaborating, and actively engaging with each other. Consider any of the following activities:

- **Numbered Heads Together:** This strategy fosters collaboration and conversation among learners and promotes accountability within small groups. It builds both whole-group conversation and individual participation. This strategy can be used in any content area with concrete and abstract questions.
- **Collaborative Posters:** This activity helps thinking become visual and fosters individual participation among a small group setting. This activity promotes learners working together to create a visual representation of their thinking and learning. Each learner contributes to their poster using an assigned colored marker. This activity is a great formative assessment for educators as well!

- **Alphabet Brainstorm:** This strategy can be done individually, in a small group, or in a whole-group structure. It fosters recall of prior knowledge, speaking and listening skills, and idea generation about any given topic. It also facilitates discussion and reflection of learning. This strategy can be done with learners of all abilities using a variety of topics.
- **Introducing a Book:** This strategy is a great pre-reading activity that works with both fiction and nonfiction texts. It will spark learner interest and engagement before jumping into the actual reading of a book. This strategy will require learners to note text features, make predictions, and gain an understanding of the content before they begin to read.

While you read the texts, you will want to support your learners with literacy strategies to foster their learning growth. Consider comprehension skills that learners will need to access the texts within the collection. It will also be important for learners to continue building background knowledge.

For example, if learners are reading the text, [\*Crossing Bok Chitto: A Choctaw Tale of Friendship & Freedom\*](#), consider having them gather information about the Choctaw nation, slavery, the Trail of Tears, or other topics having to do with Native American history. It will also be important for them to have informational context, so consider having them watch short clips of television shows or movies or read short stories to deepen comprehension. The following resources and templates will help learners build literacy skills and comprehension as they read:

- **Create a Headline:** This strategy will help learners think about the information they are learning from the text and synthesize it into a concise message through creating a headline. Their headline will be based on a number of small, synthesized, readings.
- **Iceberg Diagrams:** This strategy encourages learners to “go below the surface” with their thinking about a particular topic as they learn more and more about it. It presents learners with a visual way of organizing their new knowledge and has them use critical thinking to make connections between several topics.
- **Three Reads Protocol:** This strategy strengthens comprehension by asking learners to re-read a text multiple times while setting a specific purpose for that re-read each time. Learners can do this using a graphic organizer or design their own format in a notebook. This strategy works great across all content areas, including math, and can be used for readers of all abilities.

## Online Resources to Support Instructors

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The following resources will help instructors gather more ideas and insights for teaching texts within the *Inspirational Stories* collection:

- **Inspiration and Personal Goal Setting:** This free lesson from Prestwick House Publishers will offer learners the chance to think about their own lives, set goals, and connect with two different short texts; one by Eli Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, and the other by Billie Jean King, an inspirational tennis player.
- **Circle of Stories:** This resource from PBS will provide instructors with three lessons using the topic of Native Americans that can be used as a part of a larger unit on inspirational stories or as stand-alone lessons. Lesson one will ask learners to think about the effect of cultural stories. Lesson two will help learners think about storytelling in Native American culture and how it connects to the world they live in today. Finally, lesson three asks learners to preserve their own stories and reflect on those people and things that inspire them the most.
- **It's Never Too Late:** This resource from the New York Times will provide instructors with a series of lessons to help learners understand what it means to be a true inspiration. It will also foster reflection and promote speaking and listening skills through an interview activity. This lesson is part of a [larger series](#) on the idea "It's Never Too Late".
- **The Global Oneness Project:** This resource will provide educators and learners a variety of diverse resources including readings, videos, and lesson plans on a variety of topics regarding inspiration and inspirational stories.

## Suggestions for Using the Collection and Activities with Families

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These suggestions may be shared directly with adult learners and their families, so they can explore this theme and books together.

- ◆ Choose a book to explore from the *Inspirational Stories* collection.
- ◆ Read and discuss the book with your child. Use *before, during, and after reading* questions to help your child make connections to themselves and to other parts of their life. The following are some examples:
  - **Before Reading**

Look at the front cover with your child. Explore the pictures and text, and ask them:

    - Does this book remind you of anything?
    - What do we already know about \_\_\_\_\_?
    - What does the word, "inspirational" mean to you? What does it mean to be an inspiration?

- Why do you think it is important to learn about inspiring people?
- **During Reading**
  - If you were in this story, what do you think you would be hearing? Seeing? Tasting? Smelling? Feeling?
  - What has happened to the character(s) so far?
  - Have you been in a situation that is similar, or like, the situation the character in the story is in? What was the same for both of you? What was different?
  - What is the problem this character is experiencing? How do you think it will turn out?
  - What evidence do we know so far from the book?
- **After Reading**
  - Tell me the story in your own words.
  - What would you like to ask the author (or characters) of the book?
  - What did you like most about the story? Why?
  - Would you have done things in a different way than the character in the story did? If so, what would you have done differently?
  - Do you think it was a good ending? What would you have changed?
- ◆ After reading the story, you will notice activities at the bottom of the screen. Explore these activities with your child!

### Expanded Lesson for Educators

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The following is an example of an expanded lesson that instructors may find helpful for teaching texts within the *Inspirational Stories* collection. This lesson is an example based off the text, [Crossing Bok Chitto: A Choctaw Tale of Friendship & Freedom, by Tim Tingle](#).

- **Before Reading**
  - Explore the text features with your learners. Be sure they understand the features and how they can enhance the reading of the text.
  - Ask your learners, “What do we already know about \_\_\_\_\_?” keeping in mind the topics the books will touch upon.
  - Choose some key vocabulary words learners will come across in the text. Consider using a [semantic map](#) as a model for one or two of the words. Then, ask learners to do the same with other words you have identified.
  - Visit the [author’s website](#) to learn more about him, the other stories he has written, and the inspiration behind his writing. If

there is time, have students explore some of his other works through video, audio, or reading.

□ **During Reading**

- Encourage learners to use a [close reading protocol](#) to deepen their comprehension about the topics in the text.
- Consider having learners circulate throughout small [chat stations](#) to share their learning and reflections with each other about the text.
- Set up a [Padlet](#) for learners to engage with topics from the text.
- Provide [graphic organizers](#) for them to organize their thinking and learning if needed.

□ **After Reading**

- Ask learners to reflect on their learning from the beginning of the text to the end of the text. Consider having them share one key takeaway.
- Learners could consider writing a letter to the author of the text using guided questions you provide to them or consider using a “[question the author](#)” lesson with your learners.
- Ask learners to create a [book snap](#) with their biggest takeaway from the text. Consider putting these into a collection either digitally or physically to showcase their learning.