

# EXPLORING SAFETY, COMMUNITY AND LEARNING

A K-5 EDUCATOR RESOURCE



INSPIRED BY ZUHRA FAIZI'S EDUCATOR RESOURCE, CULTIVATING TRUST: HOW EDUCATORS CAN BUILD  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR AFGHAN REFUGEE STUDENTS

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# WELCOME!

At REACH, one of our goals is to make research accessible to educators. As a result, much of our work draws on existing research and translating it into more widely accessible resources.

The questions in this curriculum come from the REACH resource *Cultivating Trust: How Educators Can Build Relationships with their Afghan Refugee Students*, by Zuhra Faizi. This curriculum folds the "Questions to Open Conversation" (for students) developed by Zuhra at the end of *Cultivating Trust*, into discussions and activities guided by picture books. It also engages pedagogical insights from this resource through design decisions and implementation suggestions we make explicit on the following pages.

The "Questions to Open Conversation" (for students) in *Cultivating Trust* are divided into three focus areas: Safety, Community and Learning.

Questions For Students	
<b>Safety</b>	<p>What kind of classroom activities do you enjoy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do you like working in groups or individually?</li><li>• Who do you enjoy working with when we do group activities?</li></ul> <p>Is there a time when you didn't feel comfortable in class?</p> <p>What can we do so you feel more comfortable?</p>
<b>Community</b>	<p>Help me learn a little about your family so I can better support you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Who should I contact for parent-teacher meetings?</li><li>• How do your parents prefer to engage?</li></ul> <p>I'd like to learn more about the type of community services that might be available to you and your family.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are you connected to community organizations outside of school?</li></ul>
<b>Learning</b>	<p>What do you enjoy learning?</p> <p>Tell me about an activity you really enjoyed and why.</p> <p>Tell me about an activity you didn't enjoy and why.</p> <p>Tell me about a time when you needed extra support on a class activity/assignment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can we make sure I give you support next time?</li></ul>

In this curriculum, we focus on Learning, and the connected questions. We provide two books that could be used to scaffold discussions leading up to these questions, one geared towards lower elementary students, and one geared towards upper elementary students. For each book, we provide discussion questions connected to the individual book. Both of these questions, and an activity that can be completed following either book, scaffold thinking about the Learning questions outlined in *Cultivating Trust*. We provide optional printable templates that could be used for the activities.

## **Design Decisions and Implementation Suggestions**

### Deciding not to choose books by Afghan authors, about Afghan characters

One major question we considered while designing this curriculum was whether we should center books or other story-based resources by Afghan authors, about Afghan characters. We know having books that reflect your own experience can be important in fostering a sense of belonging for students. But if a student was one of the only Afghan students in the classroom, this could also single them out, reinforcing the idea that they are different from their peers. In the end we decided that it would be best for this curriculum to model opening up space to get to know Afghan refugee students by allowing them, like other students, to answer questions about learning, safety and security individually.

### Making space for both group and individual activities

Because we didn't want to put any students on the spot, and because we knew that kids can feel safer participating in different ways, we thought it was important to provide resources for both bigger class discussions, as well as individually oriented work or activities. We know educators will use the ideas we have provided to adapt them for their own contexts and learning communities.

## **A Note on Ages**

We split the resources up into broad lower and upper elementary age/grade categories. You know your learners best, so don't feel bound by our categorization!



# UNIT 1: LEARNING

## Guiding Questions

- Tell me about an activity you really enjoyed and why.
- Do you like working in groups or individually?
- Tell me about an activity you didn't enjoy and why.
- Tell me about a time when you needed extra support on a class activity or assignment?
- How can we make sure I give you support next time?

Adapted from pg. 8 *Cultivating Trust*

# LOWER ELEMENTARY

## THE MAGICAL YET BY ANGELA DITERLIZZI



### **Main Idea(s):**

Support/asking for support is not wrong. We want to be able to ask each other for help!

### **Before Reading**

- Take a close look at the cover. Does anyone have any guesses about what this book might be about? What do you see?
- Point out the names of the author and illustrator and explain what those people do.

### **While Reading**

The illustrator of this book has given us lots of little pieces of a puzzle to help us guess what this book might be about.

- Cover under the sleeve
  - Sometimes authors and illustrators will leave us little surprises under book covers. What do you see? Little creatures doing different things? I wonder what that might mean?
- Page with lots of kids
  - Look, there's a little Yet with each of the kids trying to do something. What are some things we see them trying to do?

- Page in garage
  - Who is the child looking at? Why do you think they are looking at that person?
- Page with children playing music, and following pages
  - Point out Magical Yets with all the kids in the book, trying new things
- Back inside cover
  - Let's compare the front and the back, from the beginning to the end of the story, can you spot the differences? For example, children being able to do things better as they got older, or things they couldn't do yet at the beginning!

### **After Reading - Group Brainstorm**

- What is the Magical Yet?
- Have you ever tried to do something that you couldn't do? What was it? How did you feel? Have you tried that thing again?
- Who helps children in the book do or try new things? Is there anyone who has ever helped you try something new? Have you ever helped someone else try something new?

### **After Reading - Individual Work Activity**

- Print out the poem and do blackout poetry with the second half of the book. What words stand out to you?
- Draw/create your Magical Yet. What might your Yet tell you if you're upset by things you feel like you can't do? What might your Magical Yet tell you if you think you're almost on the right track, but then something goes wrong? If it's helpful, look back at the words that stood out to you from your blackout poem. What's the next thing you hope your Magical Yet could help you with?



Resources for these activities on the next pages!

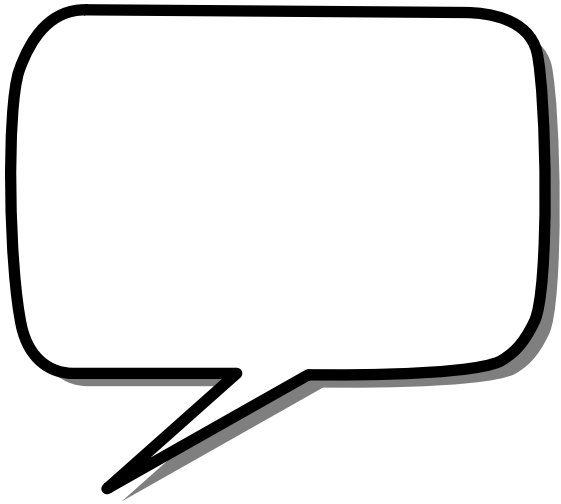
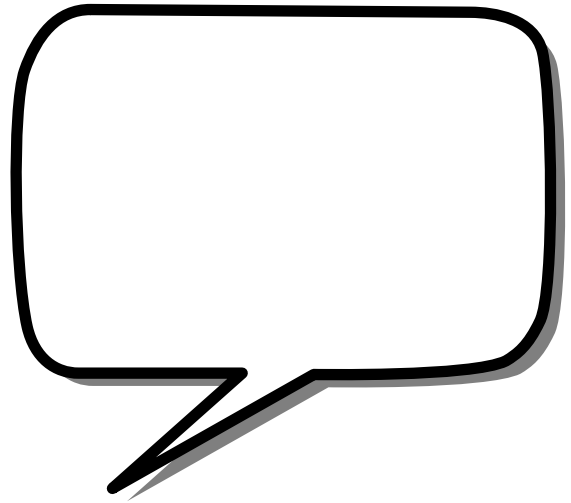
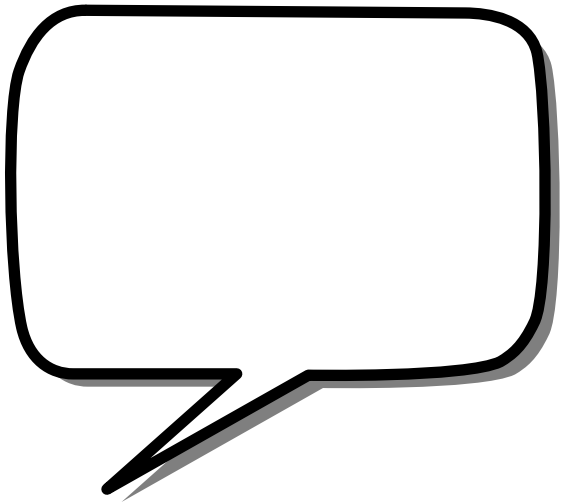


**MAKE A 3D MAGICAL YET USING THE ART SUPPLIES! IT CAN LOOK HOWEVER YOU WANT.**

**THEN, ADD TWO THINGS:**

- 1. A SPEECH BUBBLE THAT SAYS SOMETHING ENCOURAGING. THINK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU WOULD WANT TO TELL SOMEONE WHO CAN'T DO SOMETHING YET.**
- 2. THINK OF A PERSON WHO HELPS YOU WITH THINGS, OR WHO COULD HELP YOU WITH THINGS IF YOU CAN'T DO THEM YET. DRAW THEM OR SOMETHING TO REPRESENT THEM AND PUT THEM BY YOUR MAGICAL YET.**





# UPPER ELEMENTARY

## ISLANDBORN BY JUNOT DÍAZ



### **Main Idea(s):**

Support/asking for support is not wrong. We want to be able to ask each other for help!

### **While you read**

- How did Lola feel when her teacher explained the assignment? Why did she feel that way? Why does Lola not remember the Island?
- What did Lola do to help her draw the island that she didn't remember?

### **After Reading - Group Brainstorm**

- Has there ever been a time where you couldn't think about something for a class assignment? What did you do?
- Sometimes we need support on different things than our friends. What are ways you can ask for support? Who are people you can ask for support (at home, at school, in your community)? What are some things you might need help with?

# DRAW OR WRITE



TELL ME ABOUT AN ACTIVITY YOU REALLY ENJOYED AND WHY.

DO YOU LIKE WORKING IN GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALLY?

TELL ME ABOUT AN ACTIVITY YOU DIDN'T ENJOY AND WHY.

TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU NEEDED EXTRA  
SUPPORT ON A CLASS ACTIVITY/ASSIGNMENT?

HOW CAN WE MAKE SURE I GIVE YOU SUPPORT NEXT TIME?



# UNIT 2: SAFETY & SECURITY

## **Safety**

- Is there a time when you didn't feel comfortable in class? What can I do as a teacher/adult/grown up so you feel more comfortable? What can we do as a class so you feel more comfortable?
- What are your favorite ways to participate in class? How do you like to share what you know?

## **Security**

- What does it feel like to you when you feel safe?
- Are there any ways of dressing that make you feel safe, and make you feel good about yourself?

Adapted from pg. 8 *Cultivating Trust*

# LOWER & UPPER ELEMENTARY

## NIKO DRAWS A FEELING BY BOB RACZKA



### **Main Idea(s):**

There are many ways to participate, and I want to know what you enjoy, and what can make learning fun and comfortable to you.

### **After Reading - Activity (template provided on page 12)**

- Draw how you feel in school.
- Draw how you wish you felt in school, OR anything that you wish could be different to make you feel that way (or feel more comfortable in school).

### **After Reading - Individual Work (template provided on page 12)**

- Is there a time when you didn't feel comfortable in class? What can I do as a teacher/adult/grown up so you feel more comfortable? What can we do as a class so you feel more comfortable?
- What are your favorite ways to participate in class? How do you like to share what you know?

DRAW HOW YOU FEEL IN SCHOOL



DRAW HOW YOU WISH YOU FELT IN SCHOOL, OR ANYTHING THAT YOU WISH  
COULD BE DIFFERENT TO MAKE YOU FEEL THAT WAY (OR FEEL MORE  
COMFORTABLE IN SCHOOL)



# DRAW OR WRITE



IS THERE A TIME WHEN YOU  
DIDN'T FEEL COMFORTABLE IN  
CLASS?

WHAT CAN I DO AS A  
TEACHER/ADULT/GROWN UP  
SO YOU FEEL MORE  
COMFORTABLE?

WHAT CAN WE DO AS A CLASS  
SO YOU FEEL MORE  
COMFORTABLE?

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVORITE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN CLASS? HOW DO YOU LIKE TO SHARE WHAT YOU KNOW?

# LOWER ELEMENTARY

## THE MANY COLORS OF HARPREET SINGH BY SUPRIYA KELKAR



### **Main Idea(s):**

- There are many ways to dress, and no way is better than another.
- The ways we dress should make us feel good about ourselves. We don't need to understand why other people dress the way they do to respect them.
- We can try to learn more about why people dress the way they do in ways that can make them feel good about themselves.

### **Before you read**

- Take a close look at the cover. Does anyone have any guesses about what this book might be about? What do you see?
- Point out the names of the author and illustrator and explain what those people do.
- If you aren't familiar with how the author pronounces her name, or Harpreet's name, take a look at the [author's pronunciation guide](#) online.
- If you'd like, take a look at the author's [existing resources](#) for this book




### **While you read**

- What is a Patka? (see author's note in the book)
- How do Harpreet's Patkas make him feel safe, and good about himself?

### **After Reading - Individual Work**

- What does it feel like to you when you feel safe?
- Are there any ways of dressing that make you feel safe, and make you feel good about yourself?



Resources for related activities on the next pages. Additional activities on pages 22-23.

# FEELINGS WHEEL ACTIVITY

## **Materials:**

- Feelings Wheel Template
- Something to add color (colored pencils, crayons, markers, scraps of paper, magazines, paint etc)
- Optional: Glue sticks if you have anything to glue on
- Optional: If using paint, paint brushes, paint etc

*Note: Three Feelings Wheel templates are provided on the following pages. If the first template is too open ended for your learners, another template narrowing in on two feelings is provided below. One has the feelings "shy" and "brave" which we used to pilot this activity, the other has a blank you can fill in with two feelings of your choice.*

## **Activity Introduction:**

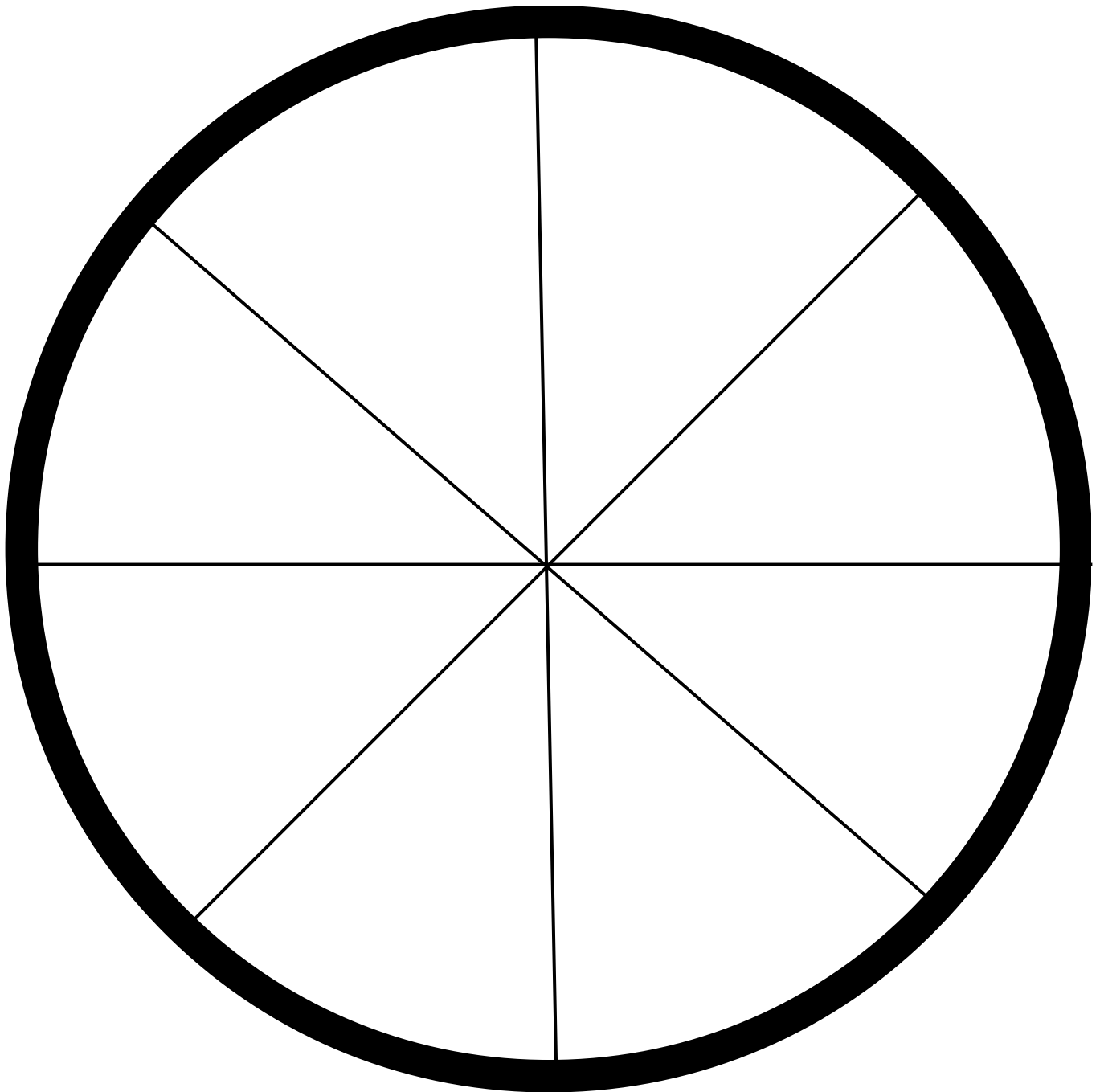
Just like Harpreet Singh, we all have many different emotions and ways of expressing them. Sometimes these emotions can feel like different colors, like bright yellow happiness or a gloomy gray when we're sad. These colors may be different for everyone. For example, your happiness may feel more like a deep red or light blue. On the Feelings Wheel below, fill in each wedge with a color that represents an emotion that you sometimes feel. Some emotions you can think about are excitement, joy, confusion, worry, anger, peaceful, safe or any other feeling that you can think of.

## **For Teachers:**

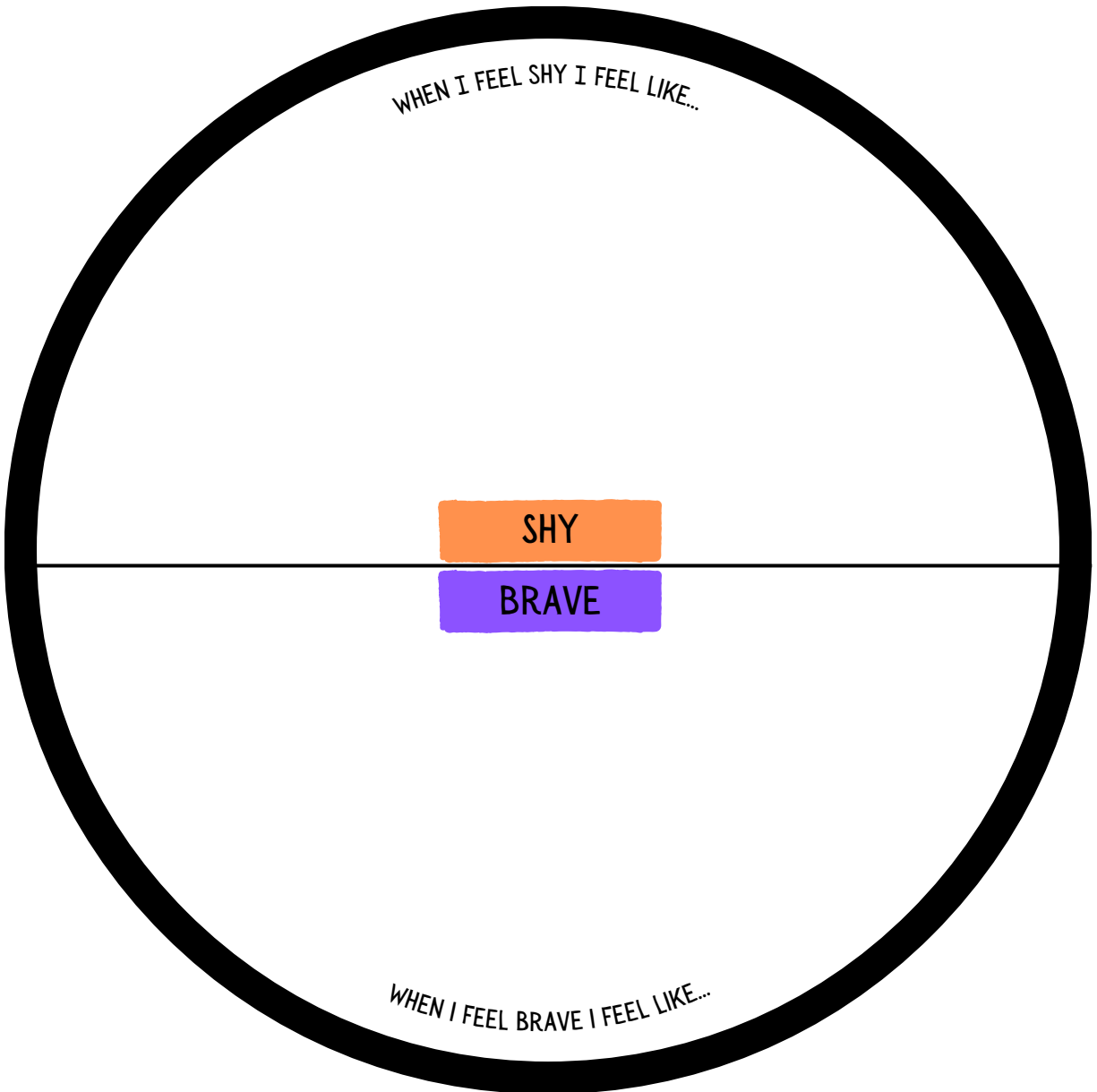
Completed wheels can be used for check-ins on how students are feeling at any given moment, either daily or multiple times throughout the day to enhance their sense of safety and security in the classroom. To engage students in these conversations, you can ask questions such as:

- Can you point to the color that you feel like today/right now?
- What does that color feel like?
- Is there a different color that you would want to feel like?
- Is there anything that could be changed to help you feel more like that color?
- Is there anything you or anyone around you can change to help you feel more like that color?

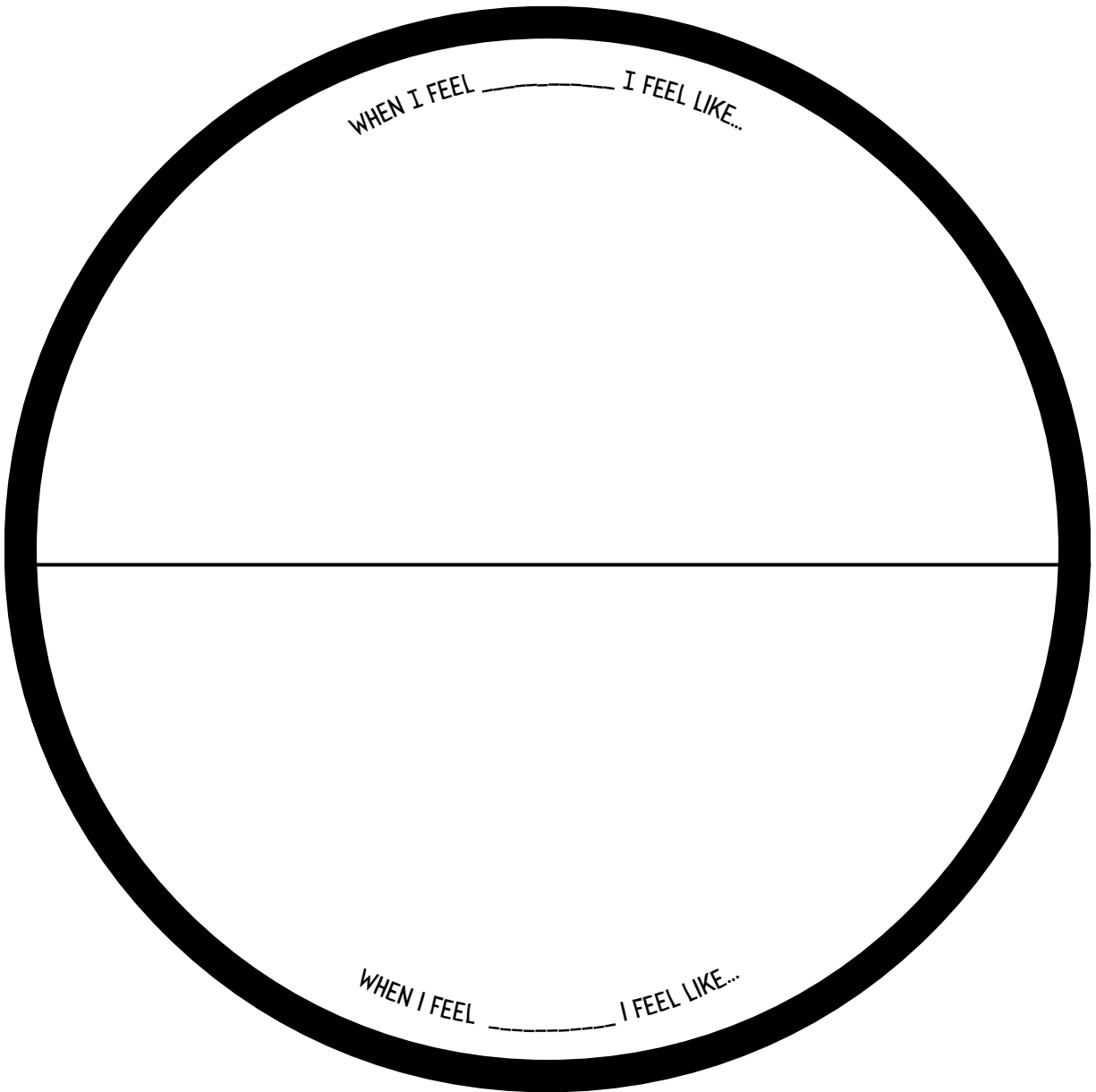
# FEELINGS WHEEL



COLLAGE OR DRAW:  
PICK COLORS, SHAPES, TEXTURES OR THINGS TO  
FILL IN THE CIRCLES



COLLAGE OR DRAW:  
PICK COLORS, SHAPES, TEXTURES OR THINGS TO  
FILL IN THE CIRCLES



# UPPER ELEMENTARY

## THE PROUDEST BLUE BY IBTIHAJ MUHAMMAD AND S.K. ALI



### **Main Idea(s):**

- There are many ways to dress, and no way is better than another.
- The ways we dress should make us feel good about ourselves. We don't need to understand why other people dress the way they do to respect them.
- We can try to learn more about why people dress the way they do in ways that can make them feel good about themselves.

### **Before Reading**

- Take a close look at the cover. Does anyone have any guesses about what this book might be about? What do you see?
- Point out the names of the author and illustrator and explain what those people do.
- If you aren't familiar with how to pronounce Asiya's name, take a look at this [interview](#) that shares the author's pronunciation.

### **After Reading - Group Brainstorm**

- Why do you think Faizah whispered the first time she told her friend about the hijab?
- Why do the boys in the book laugh at Asiya?
- How do you think that made Asiya feel? How do you know?
- What can we do when we see someone laughing at others?
- How could we learn more about why someone dresses the way they do in a way that makes them feel good about themselves?

### **After Reading - Individual Work**

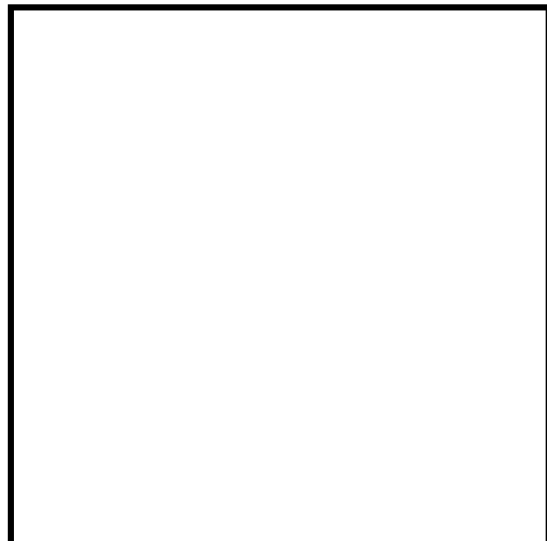
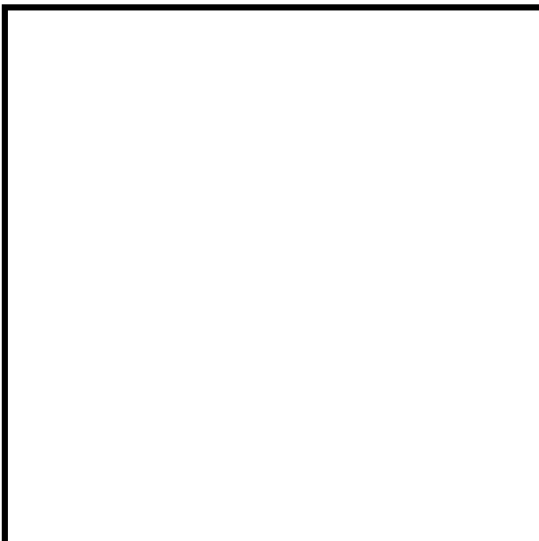
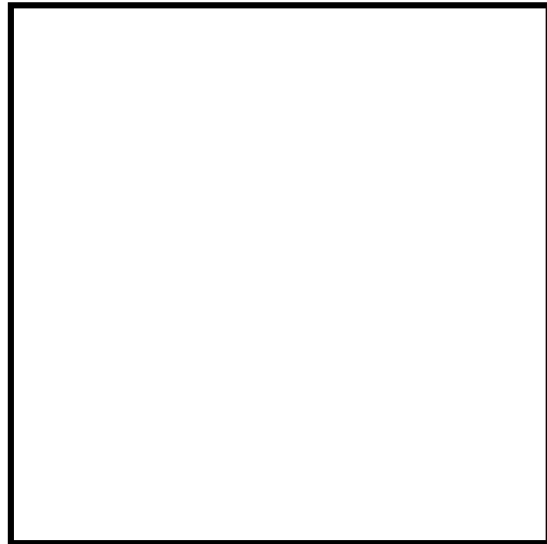
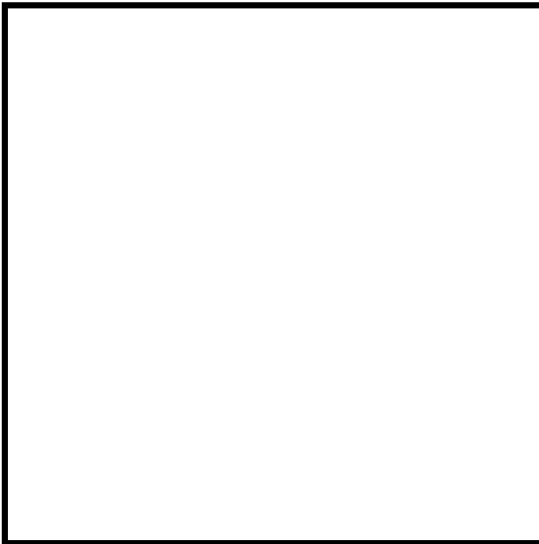
- What kinds of clothes do you wear in your family? Do you have different clothes for different occasions?
- Are there any types of clothes, or outfits that make you feel super good about yourself?
- What color do you feel like when you're sad? Happy? Angry? Proud? Excited? Disappointed?



Resources for these activities on the next pages!

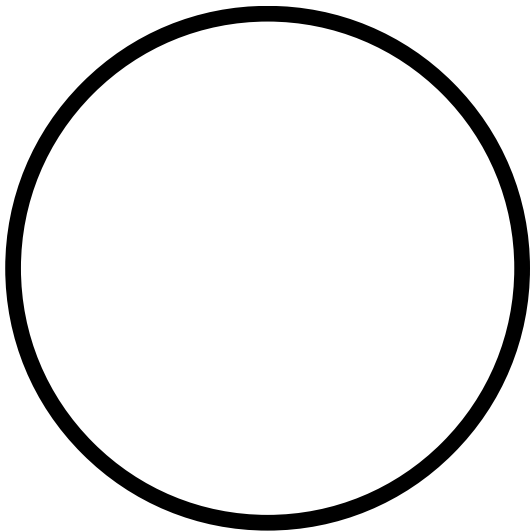
CREATE A COMIC STRIP TO SHOW US A STORY OF ONE TIME YOU WORE A TYPE OF CLOTHES THAT MADE YOU FEEL REALLY GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF.

- WHAT DID THE CLOTHES LOOK LIKE?
- WHAT WERE YOU DOING?
- WHAT TIME OF YEAR WAS IT?
- HOW CAN YOU SHOW US HOW YOU FELT WEARING THOSE CLOTHES?



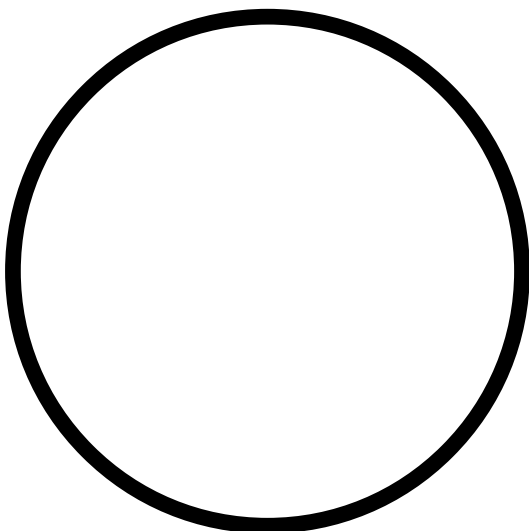


WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR LEAST  
FAVORITE EMOTIONS TO FEEL? \_\_\_\_\_



WHAT COLOR WOULD THAT  
EMOTION LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR  
FAVORITE EMOTIONS TO FEEL? \_\_\_\_\_



WHAT COLOR WOULD THAT  
EMOTION LOOK LIKE TO YOU?