

Allyship Spotlight

Introduction



grades 4-5



30 minutes

“Allyship is standing beside us when we need support, standing behind us when we need back up, and stepping in front when we need protection.”

– Emma Cusdin

Lesson Summary

Students consider the traits of a good friend and how to use those traits to act as an ally. The Adrian Simcox story highlights how a friend or ally could have supported Adrian. By the end of the lesson, students should understand that if they go through their days paying attention, they will find opportunities to use their words and actions to support others.

Students will Examine

- The character traits of good friends.
- The support that friends provide to each other.
- Why is it important to notice moments when we can act as allies?

Pre-Activity Prep

- (Optional) Print and hang a ThinkGive Three Poster (Yellow [PDF](#) | Purple [PDF](#)) in the classroom (CONNECT + CLOSE section).
- (Optional) Print or digitally share the Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)) (CONNECT + CLOSE section).



MATERIALS

ThinkGive Three Posters
(Yellow [PDF](#) | Purple [PDF](#))
ThinkGive Journals
Student Journal Guide ([PDF](#))
Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#))



MEDIA TO PREP

Slides: [Introduction](#)
Read-aloud book: [Adrian Simcox Does NOT Have a Horse](#) (10:09)

SHARE

Nothing for the Introduction, no gifts to share yet!

THINK • GIVE

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Discussion: Maître d'

- Call out: Table for (numbers 2–5). Students gather in groups based on the number called out and discuss the first topic question. Have a brief class discussion to allow groups to share.
- Call out another number. Students form new groups and discuss the next question. Have a brief class discussion.
- Repeat for other questions.

Questions:

- What are some character traits of a good friend?
- What are some ways your friends support you?
- What are some ways you support your friends?
- Why are good friends important in our lives?

CONNECTION

Article: “The 13 Essential Friendship Traits” ([PDF](#)), Psychology Today.



VOCAB

Character Traits: noun; qualities or characteristics that make up someone’s personality.

REFLECT

Suggested time: 15 minutes

Watch: [Adrian Simcox Does NOT Have a Horse](#) (10:09), a read-aloud book by Marcy Campbell. As students watch, they should identify opportunities when someone could have been a friend to Adrian.

Discuss:

- How do you think Adrian felt when his classmates didn’t believe him?
- Why do you think no one supported him?
- Describe a time when you doubted someone.
- How can you support people who aren’t your close friends?
- How can people you don’t know support you?
- What does this quote mean? “You have to walk with someone to know where they’re coming from.”

DIGGING DEEPER

Discuss: Why do you think Adrian feels happy when he tells his classmates he has a horse?

Allyship

Explain: Sometimes, we might not have friends nearby when we need them. That’s when we might need an ally. Conversely, it’s equally important to recognize opportunities when we can act as allies to others who might be missing a friend. In the Adrian Simcox book, the moments when someone could have been his friend are opportunities for allyship.



VOCAB

Ally: noun; a person or group that assists and supports an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle.
verb; to unite with another for mutual benefit.

Discuss:

- Who could have acted as an ally for Adrian early in the story? What could that person have done to act as an ally?
- Can someone be an ally but not a friend? Explain.

DIGGING DEEPER

Ask: What does this statement mean: “Understanding is sweeter than judgment.” How does it relate to the story?

CONNECT + CLOSE

ThinkGive Three (Optional)

Introduce students to the ThinkGive Three, a guide for how to give. Every prompt will revisit these ideas so students can incorporate them into their thinking. Hang a ThinkGive Three Poster (Yellow [PDF](#) | Purple [PDF](#)) in your class to serve as a reminder throughout the program.

1. TRUE. Be your authentic self in your actions and words.
2. SMALL. Small is all! Everything we do and say matters, and everything we do and say has an impact—no matter how small.
3. BRAVE. Step into your courage zone; challenge yourself to be brave with your actions and words.

Take Action

Explain: Between now and our next ThinkGive session [give date], notice moments when someone—maybe a friend, teacher, parent, or teammate—supports you. Then, just like in the story of Adrian Simcox, try to understand where others are coming from and offer your support.

Things to Consider

- What character traits do you value in a good friend? How can you be a good friend to support someone else?
- You can use your words and/or actions to support someone.
- Opportunities for kindness and allyship can appear at any moment.

Closing Quote

Use this quote to close out the lesson. The reflective questions could serve as an Exit Ticket ([PDF](#) | [Google](#)).

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– Emma Cusdin

- Who do you know who supports others when things happening aren’t fair or right?




★ THINK.GIVE THREE

1. True: be authentic
2. Small: small is all!
3. Brave: step into your courage zone



★ CONNECTION

Emma Cusdin is the director of Global Butterfly. She has spent her life fighting for LGBTQ+ rights in the workplace and business.

Reflection Questions

-  Describe a moment when someone supported you.
 -  What action did you take to support someone?
 -  Why is it important for people at school to support each other?
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Journal Questions

-  Write about a time when someone you didn't know well or at all supported you.
-  What does Emma Cusdin's quote mean to you? "Allyship is standing beside us when we need support, standing behind us when we need backup, and stepping in front when we need protection."