

FRIENDSHIP

ACTIVITY PACK

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Chances are most middle schoolers are laser focused on friendship. They're learning what it means to be a good friend, how and why friendship is important, what happens as friendships shift, and more. Reading about kids going through friendship challenges similar to theirs can help kids navigate the ride, and we hope these books and resources will support them.

This activity packet includes a selection of resources for educators, families, and students.

BOOKLIST: A list of books about friendship recommended by RIF

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY: An activity about friendship for the classroom

HOME ACTIVITY: An activity about friendship designed to help students continue learning at home

STUDENT ACTIVITY: An activity about friendship for students to complete independently

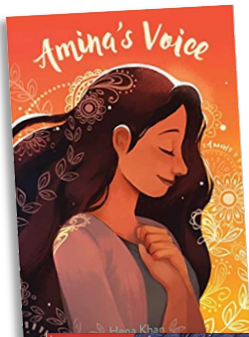
We suggest you print and copy the **Home Activity, Student Activity, and Booklist** pages and send them home to extend the learning.

For more reading resources, visit

www.RIF.org/literacy-central/collections/middle-school-family-literacy-initiative-friendship

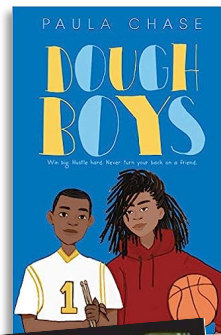
FRIENDSHIP BOOKLIST

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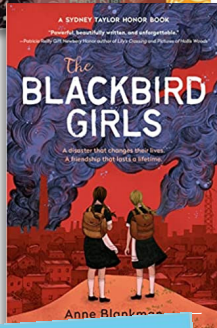
Amina's Voice

Author: Hena Khan
The Arts, Grades 3-7



Dough Boys

Author: Paula Chase, Friendship,
Grades 3-7



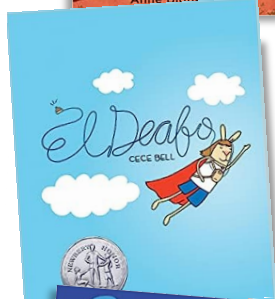
The Blackbird Girls

Author: Anne Blankman
History, Grades 4-7



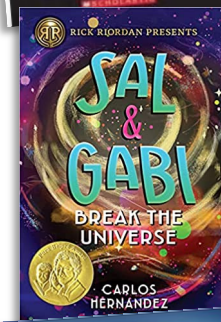
Raven Hill Mysteries: Dirty Tricks

Author: Emily Rodda Mystery,
Grades 4-7



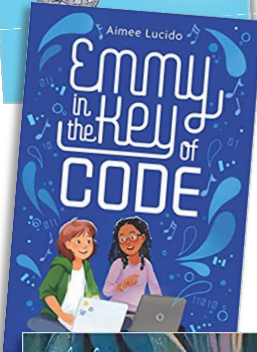
El Deafo

Author: Cece Bell, Funny,
Grades 3-7



Sal and Gabi Break the Universe

Author: Carlos Hernandez
Fantasy/Sci-Fi, Grades 3-7



Emmy in the Key of Code

Author: Aimee Lucido
STEM, Grades 4-7



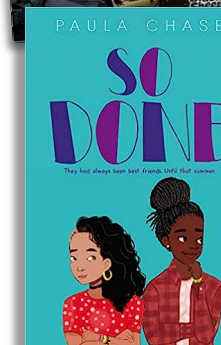
Lewis and Clark Map the American West

Author: Nel Yomtov, Nature,
Grades 3-8



The Girl and the Ghost

Author: Hanna Alkaf
Horror, Grades 3-7



So Done

Author: Paula Chase, Problem Solving,
Grades 3-7

Reading
Is Fundamental.

until every child reads

CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

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FRIENDLY CHARACTERS

Students who are engaged in stories really get to know the characters as they put themselves in their shoes, worry about their conflicts, and cheer for their success. This activity draws out some truths about what it means to be a good friend, using characters for analysis.

STEPS

1. Highlight and discuss books about friendship to support this activity, but also consider that most middle grade fiction has at least one featured friendship so all the stories your students are familiar with are probably useful in this activity.
2. Have students work individually or in pairs/small groups (if they've read the same book) to complete the attached Character Analysis page.
3. Using sticky notes or another data collection strategy that's anonymous, collect at least one trait from every student's Character Analysis, until you have a list of at least 10 traits that students in your class think are important in a good friend.
 - If many students in your class have read the same book, put a few examples from the ACTION column on the Character Analysis page on the board.
4. In groups or as a whole class, using your class-generated list as a foundation, discuss and debate who the best friend of all time is in the books – or shows, movies, or other well-known genre – that your students are familiar with.

FRIENDSHIP CHARACTER ANALYSIS

FRIENDSHIP CHARACTER ANALYSIS

NAME _____ DATE _____

Use this chart to help you analyze a character that demonstrates characteristics of a good friend.

Character Name:
Book:

ACTION THAT DEMONSTRATED FRIENDSHIP	CHARACTERISTIC(S) DEMONSTRATED BY ACTION

Would you want to be friends with this character IRL? (3 sentences):

HOME ACTIVITY

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HOW DID YOU MEET?

Your middle schooler has been learning about friendship at school and this activity is designed to extend the learning at home.

Sometimes your children don't know much about your friendships. They may not know how they started, what you do together, or what you value about them. Learning about friendships in all stages of life can be helpful to children and teens as they navigate their own social life. This activity is intended to be a conversation starter.

STEPS

1. Make a list (in your head is fine) of the friends you'd like to include in this activity. It could be a short list or a long list. It might be helpful if your child knows the people on the list, but it's not necessary.
2. For each person on your list, tell your child the story of how you met this friend. Include as many of the common story elements as you can: setting (including time period/how old you were), characters, plot, conflict. Finish up by naming one characteristic that has made this person a good friend over the years.
3. Invite questions and curiosity. Consider sharing more information about how you have maintained a connection with a friend or more than one friend, what you think is important to friendships, and any other wisdom you have to share.
4. Ask your child to share information about their own friendships – both successes and struggles.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

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PICK 3 CHARACTER FRIENDS

You've been focusing on friendships, and this activity lets you consider all the things you've learned as you imagine getting to pick friends from the books you've read. Imagine that they are jumping off the page and into your social life. Who would you pick?

STEPS

1. Think about your own list of important traits in a friend.
2. Make an actual list of characters that you've met in books you've read this year and in the past (picture books and books from elementary school count, as do books you've read for school and books you've read on your own!)
3. Without trying too hard to match the traits you have listed (part of friendship is mysterious, after all), pick three characters that you think you'd most like to hang out with IRL.
 - Would you all hang out together or would these more likely be 1-to-1 friendships?
 - What would you do together for fun?
 - Which one would have your back in a minute?
 - Are there any people you are friends with IRL that remind you of these characters?
4. (Optional) Compare notes with your classmates or friends to see if everyone picks the same characters.