

# The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Collection

## Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

### Big by Vashti Harrison

**Self-Awareness** (understanding emotions, self-perception, and confidence)

**Self-Management** (coping with emotions, resilience, and self-love)

**Social Awareness** (understanding how words and actions affect others)

**Relationship Skills** (healthy friendships, supporting others)

**Responsible Decision-Making** (responding to unkindness, making choices that reflect self-worth)

#### Background

*Big* by Vashti Harrison is a deeply emotional and beautifully illustrated story about a young girl who starts out full of joy and confidence but gradually begins to feel different as others make comments about her size. As she grows, she struggles with self-perception and external judgments but ultimately finds self-acceptance and empowerment. The book's powerful message encourages discussions about kindness, self-worth, and how our words and actions impact others.

#### Before You Read

Look at the cover—what do you notice about the girl? How does she look?

What do you think the word "big" means? Can it mean different things?

Have you ever felt like people saw you differently than you see yourself?

Why do you think people sometimes make comments about others? How do those comments make people feel?

This book has **special fold-out pages**—why do you think the author might have included them? What do fold-out pages make you pay attention to?

#### While You Read

##### Guiding Questions

**(Self-Awareness)** How does the girl feel at the beginning of the book? What words or pictures show us her feelings?

**(Social Awareness)** What do you notice about how other people start talking to her? How does their tone or language change?

**(Self-Management)** How do the girl's emotions change as people comment on her? Have you ever felt sad because of something someone said?

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	<p><b>(Relationship Skills)</b> Do the other kids notice how she is feeling? What could they do differently?</p> <p><b>(Responsible Decision-Making)</b> When she starts shrinking away from others, what choices does she make? Why?</p> <p><b>(Self-Awareness)</b> One of the pages folds out when she takes up space—why do you think the author made that page bigger?</p> <p><b>(Self-Management)</b> What does the girl do when she starts to feel overwhelmed? What helps her feel strong again?</p> <p><b>(Social Awareness)</b> How does the way she sees herself change throughout the story?</p> <p><b>(Relationship Skills)</b> What does this book teach us about how we talk about others and their bodies?</p> <p><b>(Self-Awareness &amp; Empowerment)</b> At the end of the book, how does she reclaim her power? What message does this book leave with us?</p>
<p><b>After Reading</b></p>	<p><b>K-2 Activity: “My Superpower is...” Self-Love Reflection</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Students will recognize their own strengths and celebrate what makes them special.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Discussion:</b> Ask, “What makes you feel strong and confident like the girl at the end of the book?”</li> <li>2. <b>Drawing &amp; Writing:</b> Each student will draw a picture of themselves taking up space and write (or dictate) a sentence that starts with <b>"My superpower is..."</b> (e.g., "My superpower is being kind," "My superpower is running fast," "My superpower is making people laugh.")</li> <li>3. <b>Gallery Walk:</b> Students will share their drawings, celebrating each person's unique strengths.</li> </ol> <p><b>3-5 Activity: “Words That Lift Us Up” Community Project</b></p> <p><b>Objective:</b> Students will reflect on how words impact others and create a classroom display that promotes kindness and self-acceptance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Discussion:</b> Have students reflect on a time when words made them feel <b>big</b> (strong, loved, confident) or <b>small</b> (invisible, hurt, upset).</li> <li>2. <b>Brainstorm:</b> Create two lists on the board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Hurtful words that make people feel small</b></li> <li>○ <b>Empowering words that help people feel big and strong</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>3. <b>Classroom Display:</b> Each student writes an empowering phrase on a large cut-out star, and the class creates a "Words That Lift Us Up" wall.</li> </ol>

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|  | <p>4. <b>Personal Reflection:</b> Students write a letter to themselves about their own strengths and how they can support others when they feel small.</p> |
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