

The SEL Interactive Read Aloud Collection

Tulare County Office of Education

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I Walk With Vanessa by Kerascoet

Self-Awareness (recognizing emotions in oneself and others)

Self-Management (managing emotions and making responsible choices)

Social Awareness (understanding kindness, empathy, and inclusivity)

Relationship Skills (building friendships, helping others, and working together)

Responsible Decision-Making (choosing to stand up for others and create a positive impact)

Background

I Walk with Vanessa is a powerful wordless picture book that tells the story of a young girl, Vanessa, who experiences bullying. Another child notices Vanessa's sadness and decides to take action by showing kindness. The simple act of walking with Vanessa inspires the entire community to support her, showing the importance of compassion, inclusion, and standing up for others. This book encourages discussions about empathy and how small acts of kindness can create big changes.

Before You Read

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

Have you ever felt lonely or left out? How did it make you feel?

Why do you think kindness is important? What does it mean to “stand up” for someone?

Have you ever seen someone being treated unfairly? What could you do to help?

This book has no words—how do you think we can still understand the story

While You Read

Guiding Questions

(Self-Awareness) Look at Vanessa's face when she is alone—how do you think she is feeling?

(Social Awareness) Why do you think the other kids are looking at Vanessa differently?

(Self-Management) How do you think Vanessa feels after being bullied? What do you do when you feel sad?

(Relationship Skills) What does the girl in the yellow dress notice? Why is that important?

(Responsible Decision-Making) Instead of ignoring Vanessa's feelings, what

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	<p>does the girl decide to do?</p> <p>(Social Awareness) How do you think Vanessa feels when the girl first walks with her?</p> <p>(Self-Awareness) Have you ever been helped by a friend when you were feeling down? How did that make you feel?</p> <p>(Relationship Skills) Why do you think more kids start walking with Vanessa? How does kindness spread?</p> <p>(Social Awareness) What message do you think this story is trying to teach us?</p> <p>(Responsible Decision-Making) What can we do in our own school to make sure no one feels alone like Vanessa?</p>
After Reading	<p>Objective: Students will reflect on ways they can show kindness in their daily lives and create a classroom kindness plan.</p> <p>Activity Steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Discussion: Ask students, "What small actions can we take to help someone feel included and supported?"2. Draw & Write: Each student draws a picture of a kind action they will take at school (e.g., inviting someone to play, saying kind words, helping a friend).3. Kindness Chain: As a class, create a paper chain where each link represents an act of kindness that students have done or witnessed. Keep adding to the chain throughout the year!4. Role-Playing: Have students act out different scenarios (e.g., what to do if they see someone sitting alone) to practice kindness and inclusion.