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Reflecting Upon Literacy Strategies

Language involves understanding and communicating through oral language. Literacy involves learning words, sounds, language, and writing. Throughout my time interning at Earth School with this classroom I've noticed on several occasions the children would say "I can't." "I can't do it." or "It's too hard." and so what I aim to do is eliminate those phrases. Like author Susan Verde says when our mind thinks "I can't." we say "Yes, I can." The activity I created consists of two worksheets. One worksheet says "Think of a time you needed to have courage... Draw and write about it." In addition, throughout the read aloud I will ask meaningful questions to engage the children. The second worksheet is a wordsearch. I was hoping to strengthen young learners' capacity for resilience when facing a challenge. I'd say my activity plan was effective in which they were engaged and had thoughtful responses to each and every one of my questions.

I addressed the literacy strengths and needs of each child during the activity in which part of the process is completing the actual worksheets. To be able to relate and think of a time they needed to have courage and reflect back to that challenge and express how they had felt and what they did to have courage. For example I did the worksheet with them. And my example read, "A time I needed to have courage was my first day coming to Earth School. I was super nervous. But I was very excited because Ms. Kimberly and the class community were super fun." They absolutely loved my example and said it was cool that I drew the white board like the one in the morning meeting. Arian and Saeed's example were both about the time they rode a bike for the first time. Saeed said he used his sister's pink bike. He also says that now he wants to get his very own bike. Moving on to the wordsearch. Arian and Saeed were super eager. Saeed said, "I found fun." Arian said, "Wait, there's no fun." Saeed said, "Fun!" Arian said, "There's no fun." Saeed said, "This is fun see. Fun Fun Fun Fun Fun Fun Fun Fun!" This interaction was interesting because I actually didn't have fun listed on the word search but they found it and simply added fun to the list. Arian says, "I am balanced, I'm strong, brave, balanced." Overall I'd say both Saeed and Arian enjoyed the activity and expressing their thoughts in such meaningful ways.

Throughout the read aloud I asked meaningful questions such as, Does anyone know what resilience means? They both say no. So I say well what's going on here? Arian says, "He fell down off the bike." He's riding his bike and what happens? He tumbles and gets right back up. Who helps him? Saeed points to his friend. Arian says "The dog was a part of it." Does anyone know what uplifting means? Arian says, "It means you're lifting something." I say well for

example look at the illustration. What do you notice about the girl with pink hair? The girl looks upset, and her friends are trying to UPLIFT her, encourage her, to make her feel better, to make her feel happy. Arian says, "Like cheer her up. I think she's upset because something happened to her, like something happened, that and she was upset and so... Arian adds on,"They stayed in there till the night, this is the sunset, and that's the night." I say "There's a tent and a nightfire." Saeed says, "It's called a campfire." What does uncertain mean? Being unsure, not knowing what is going to happen. Can you predict what he might be uncertain about on this page? Earlier in the book we saw him tumble off his bike and he feared it might happen again. Arian says, "Because bikes are not that sturdy. And they don't have that much balance and Saeed adds, "He needs the bike with four wheels." Arian says, "I have training wheels until I get old." Saeed says, "My sister does but I don't." Arian says, "Wait he could do what? I could do an ollie with my scooter. That's called an ollie. Like this (proceeds to show me). You go like this and jump and the scooter jumps with you. That's an ollie. I could do it." The conversation goes on and on but I notice how the children were thinking more deeply and had so much to offer in the discussion based on their experience and the information presented in the book.

Some changes I would make to the literacy extension activity based is to create a sentence starter. This book in particular has a lot of new vocabulary words and so I would explain the meaning and use the illustration to show them. I think these changes would improve the activity in terms of making a stronger structure. Even though I did a worksheet with them and showed them my picture and read them my writing. They gravitate more to the drawing and our discussion. There was a lot of language involved and engagement.