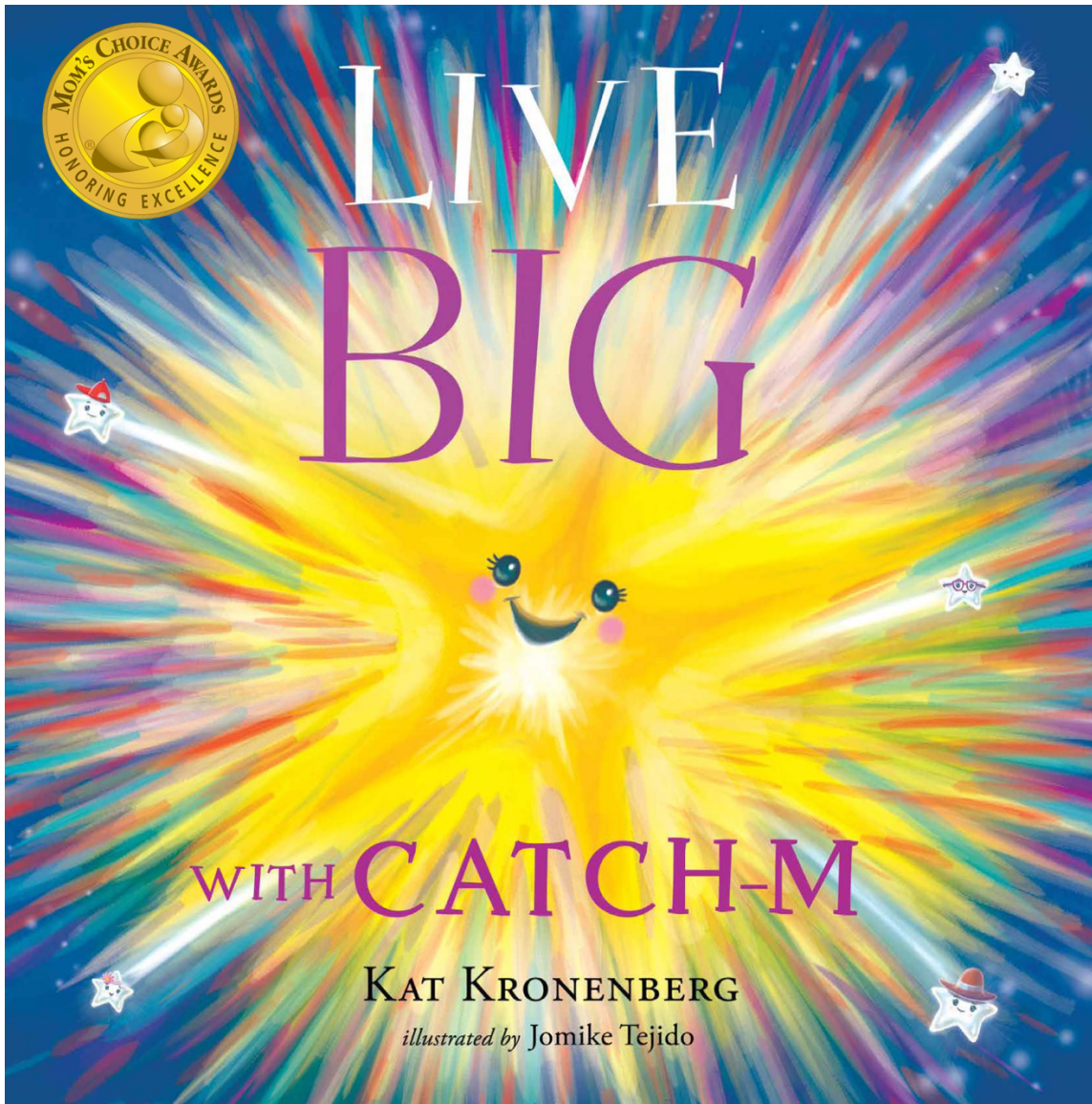


Live Big with CATCH-M

A teacher's guide created by Marcie Colleen
based upon the picture book
written by Kat Kronenberg and illustrated by Jomike Tejido



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Kat Kronenberg
Author, *Live Big with CATCH-M*

Kat Kronenberg is a born-and-raised Texan with a big dream: that Two-Leggers—people—all around the world wake up every day, smile big, and believe that they are extraordinary with the gift of CATCH-M, love’s wondrous spark in their hearts. Kat hopes her Live Big Series encourages readers everywhere to celebrate love’s wonders as we all DREAM BIG, LOVE BIG, and THINK BIG together and build our heart’s treasure. Kat lives in Austin with her husband and is the proud parent of two amazing boys, two beautiful, adopted nieces, five fantastic grandchildren, and one four-legged friend.



Jomike Tejido
Illustrator, *Live Big with CATCH-M*

Jomike Tejido was once an architect until he decided that making picture books brings out his brightest spark. He is the author-illustrator of whimsical titles like *There Was an Old Woman Who Lived in a Book* and *Robot Versus Dinosaur*. Apart from bookmaking, Jomike is an abstract painter on canvas.

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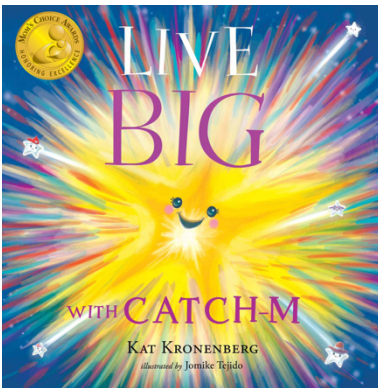
How to Use This Guide

This classroom guide for *Live Big with CATCH-M* is designed for students in first through third grade. It is assumed that teachers will adapt each activity to fit the needs and abilities of their own students.

It offers activities to help teachers integrate *Live Big with CATCH-M* into English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies curricula. Art and drama are used as teaching tools throughout the guide.

All activities were created in conjunction with relevant content standards in ELA, math, science, social studies, art, and drama.

Book Information



Live Big with CATCH-M

Age Range: 2 – 10 years

Grade Level: Preschool – 5

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Set long ago in history, in one of the best-illustrated children's books in Kat's best-selling, multi-award-winning Live Big series; readers follow a little love spark named CATCH-M who wakes up in the dark. No other sparks are there. CATCH-M feels alone and scared. After struggling with crazy emotions, CATCH-M finds his full braveheart and discovers how to think bigger, creating a magic moment that changes everything! *BANG!*

CATCH-M does good, shining and sharing love's wondrous power everywhere. Millions of miraculous CATCH-Ms create wonders like Mother Earth, where we all can experience the fun of love and friendship. But in the wilds of East Africa, Baby Cheetah and Zebra struggle with crazy emotions too. Can they find the gift of CATCH-M, love's wondrous spark in their hearts, and listen, using love's powerful secrets to live big with full bravehearts?

Live Big with Catch-M's inspirational message makes it the perfect gift for every age. Everyone, everywhere, will delight in learning love's powerful secrets—*shhh*—DREAM BIG, LOVE BIG, and THINK BIG—to catch CATCH-M love every day and be extraordinary stars in our stories together!

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS



Reading Comprehension

Use the following questions and activities to help students engage deeply with *Live Big with CATCH-M*, both before and after reading.

Before Reading

Introduce the structure and visual elements of a picture book:

- Look at the **front cover**, **back cover**, and **title page**. Describe what you see.
- The title is *Live Big with CATCH-M*. What do you think it means to live big?
- Look closely at the **cover illustration**:
 - How would you describe the star-shaped spark on the cover?
 - How do you think the spark (CATCH-M) is feeling? What clues tell you that?
 - Who or what do you think CATCH-M is?

Ask students to predict:

- What is the book *Live Big with CATCH-M* about?
- What clues on the front and back cover help you guess?

After Reading

Invite students to summarize the story in their own words, then reflect on its meaning with the following discussion prompts:

- How does CATCH-M handle being alone and scared?
- CATCH-M hears love's whisper from his heart.
What do you think it says?
Have you ever heard your heart tell you something?
- What does “**smile big and believe**” mean to you?
When do you smile the biggest?
- What do you think it means to have a **braveheart**?
Can you name a time when you were brave?

- What do you think this story is trying to teach us about love?

Creative Challenge:

- Summarize the story in **10 words or less**.



Close Reading: Key Words and Illustration Spreads

Use the following pages to guide focused discussion and art analysis:

1. “I fought my shadow thoughts” spread:

- What do you see? What colors are used?
- What do you think CATCH-M is feeling?
- List five words that describe this scene.
- What are some ways we might fight our own “shadow thoughts”?

2. “My heart whispered” spread:

- Make a list of everything you notice in the artwork.
- How is this spread visually different from earlier pages?
- How would you describe what is happening?
- Create **thought bubbles** over CATCH-M’s head—what might he be thinking?
- Share something kind your heart has whispered to you.

3. “Love does ‘Big Bang’ with glory!” spread:

- What’s happening here that’s different?
- Describe the spread in **five words**.

4. “Help Baby Cheetah” spread:

- Describe Baby Cheetah’s body language and what his eyes are doing?
- Why do you think CATCH-M wants to help?
- Can you act out how Baby Cheetah might be feeling?



Author & Illustrator Study

- Who is the **author**? What does an author do?
- Who is the **illustrator**? What does an illustrator do?
- What are some ways the author shows love through words?
- How does the illustrator use **color** to show love and emotion?

Writing Activities



Write the Scene

Choose a spread from *Live Big with CATCH-M* and write a full story around it, with a beginning, middle, and end.

For example:

- Were Baby Cheetah, Zebra, and Termite playing or talking before the storm? What were they saying to each other?
- What happens when Baby Cheetah gets separated from his mom? How do they react?
- What does Baby Cheetah do after he is reunited with his mom?

Encourage imaginative detail and dialogue.

Language Activities



Vocabulary: *Brave*

- Ask students: What does it mean to be **brave**?
- Record their responses on the board.
- Look up the word in the dictionary (teacher- or student-led).
- Discuss: “How being brave means doing something even when it feels scary or hard.”

Connect brave to the book:

- What brave moments do we see in *Live Big with CATCH-M*?

- Do the characters appear braver after they listen to their heart?
- What do you think it means to have a **braveheart** like CATCH-M?



Create a Braveheart Banner

Materials:

- Chart paper/poster board labeled “Our Bravehearts”
- Markers, crayons, cut-out stars

Steps:

1. Draw a large heart in the center of the chart paper.
2. One by one, students:
 - Add a drawing, color, or symbol that represents bravery.
 - Or write a short sentence: “Brave is trying something new,” or “Brave is helping someone.”
3. Each student gets a star cut-out.
 - Write or draw one brave thing they’ve done or want to try.
4. Hang the stars around the banner as a visual celebration of courage.



Affirmation Mirrors

Live Big with CATCH-M is filled with affirmations and power phrases. This activity allows students to recognize and internalize positive self-talk by using powerful language from the book.

Materials:

- Paper cut-outs shaped like mirrors
- Markers, crayons, glitter, etc.
- Chart with affirmations from the story

Steps:**1. Find and read aloud the pages with affirmations:**

- “I am extraordinary!”
- “I love me!”
- “I can do good!”
- I smiled big and believed.

2. Discuss:

- What do these phrases mean?
- How do they make you feel?

3. Create:

- Students choose a phrase or create their own.
- Write it on their paper “mirror” and decorate it with colors, sparkles, or drawings that represent their inner light and strength.

4. Share:

- Invite students to read their affirmations aloud while looking in a real or pretend mirror—encourage a big smile or confident voice.

5. Display:

- “Wall of Affirmations:” Create a display of all the students’ mirrors to celebrate and remember their strengths daily.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES



Feelings Map of the Heart

Help students identify and explore the emotions experienced by the characters in *Live Big with CATCH-M*—and themselves—through vocabulary and reflection.

Materials:

- Blank heart templates (one per student)
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Emotion word cards or a printed list (e.g., scared, lonely, grateful, brave, hopeful, loved, happy)

Steps:

1. Read Aloud Reflection

As you reread or review the book, pause to ask:

- How does CATCH-M feel at the beginning?
- What is Baby Cheetah feeling when he's separated from his mom?
- How do each of their feelings change by the end?

2. Brainstorm Together

Create a class list of emotions found in the story. Include student suggestions and display them on the board or poster paper.

3. Create Personal Heart Maps

Give each student a heart template and ask them to divide it into sections similar to a pie chart (both sides can work as well).

- Fill each section with a **feeling word** from the class list.
- Color each section with a color that matches the feeling.
- Draw a simple picture that shows a time the student felt that way, or a character in the book.

- Repeat on the other side with more feeling words from the book.

4. Pair and Share

Students can pair up and take turns sharing one section of their heart. Encourage them to talk about a time they felt like CATCH-M or Baby Cheetah in the book.

5. Class Discussion

Reflect on these questions together:

- How do feelings change over time?
- What helps you go from scared to brave, or lonely to loved?



Mixed-Up Feeling Jars

Help students understand that it's normal to experience more than one emotion at a time, especially during big life changes.

Materials:

- Clear plastic jars with wide mouths (or large plastic cups)
- Small slips of paper
- Markers or crayons

Steps:

1. Explore Emotions

Give each student a few slips of paper. On each slip:

- Write the name of a feeling.
- Color the paper in a way that matches the feeling.
- On the back, write a short sentence about why or when they feel that way.

2. Fill the Jars

Place all the slips into the jars. Shake them gently to mix them up.

3. Demonstrate Mixed Emotions

Hold up a jar and explain:

“Sometimes, especially during hard moments—like grief, change, or uncertainty—we

feel many things at once. It's normal to feel happy and sad, scared and excited, all at the same time."

4. Interactive Prediction

Shake the jar. Ask students to predict three emotions you might pull out with your eyes closed. Then pull three slips. Were they right?

5. Reflect Together

- Why do you think we feel mixed emotions?
- How can talking about our feelings help when we're feeling confused or overwhelmed?

Speaking, Listening & Drama Activities

These activities encourage students to practice communication skills, express emotions, and engage deeply with the themes of *Live Big with CATCH-M*.



Listen and Share Circle

Help students build empathy, listening skills, and a sense of community by creating a safe space where they can share their thoughts and feelings. We all experience big emotions, and the gift of being a friend means listening and allowing someone the chance to express themselves.

Materials:

- *Live Big with CATCH-M* book, CATCH-M, or a designated object (e.g., a talking stick, plush star, or toy)

Steps:

1. Set the Circle

Gather students in a circle. Explain that only the person holding the book or object may speak; everyone else's job is to listen with care and respect.

2. Take Turns Sharing

Invite one student to speak and share a sentence or personal story related to the themes found in *Live Big with CATCH-M*, such as connection, cooperation, and communicating love. Prompts to use:

- “One way I try to live big is...”
- “A time I listened to my braveheart was...”
- “I love to ‘do good’ by...”

3. Encourage Reflection

After each share, invite the group to say together sincerely:

- “Thank you for sharing.”
- You can invite one or two responses from the group, such as, “I felt the same way when...”



Emotions Mime

Live Big with CATCH-M is filled with feelings. Mimes are a fun game to help students recognize and express their feelings and emotions through gestures and facial expressions, just like the characters in the book.

Steps:

1. Choose an emotion from the story (e.g., scared, brave, excited, sad, hopeful).
2. One student silently acts out the feeling using only **facial expressions** and **body movements**—no words!
3. The rest of the class guesses the emotion.
4. Once the emotion is guessed correctly, ask:
 - “When did CATCH-M feel this way?”
 - “Have you ever felt this way too?”

Variation:

Write emotion words on slips of paper and place them in a “mystery hat.” Students take turns drawing one and acting it out.



Drama: Book Trailer or Commercial

Let students use their imaginations to promote *Live Big with CATCH-M* through dramatic play.

Project: Create a Commercial to Encourage Reading the Book

Steps:

1. Brainstorm the Message

- Why should people read *Live Big with CATCH-M*?
- What's the most exciting or powerful part of the story?

2. Write a Script

- Create characters, choose narrators, and decide on dialogue.
- Keep the script short—30 seconds to 1 minute.

3. Perform or Record

- Act out the commercial using props or puppets.
- Optionally, record the performance to share with other classes or families.

4. Reflect:

- What part of the story inspired your commercial?
- How did acting help you connect more deeply with the message?

Math Integration

The math activities below encourage students to explore concepts like counting, addition, subtraction, sequencing, and data collection—using the world of *Live Big with CATCH-M* to make learning meaningful and fun.



Word Problems with CATCH-M

Use illustrations from the book to create visual math problems that strengthen early number sense and problem-solving skills.

For example:

Look at the “**Millions of CATCH-Ms**” illustration (page 22-23):

- “How many CATCH-M sparks do you see?”
- Now draw 8 CATCH-M sparks on your paper.
- Then draw 3 more glowing CATCH-Ms.
- **Question:** How many CATCH-M sparks are there now?

Write the equation: $8 + 3 = \underline{\quad}$

- What if 2 sparks float away?
- Write the equation: $11 - 2 = \underline{\quad}$

More practice:

- Count the planets in the background.
- Draw 6 planets, then draw 2 more.

Write the equation: $6 + 2 = \underline{\quad}$

- How many total? What if 4 disappear?
- Write the equation: $8 - 4 = \underline{\quad}$



Counting CATCH-Ms: Graphing Activity

Turn visual literacy into data collection with this hands-on activity.

Steps:

1. Reread the book, pausing on pages where CATCH-M sparks appear.
2. Ask: “How many sparks do you see on this page?”
3. Use **tally marks** to keep count.
4. After the read-aloud, count the total for each spread and record results as a class.
5. Create a **bar graph** to display the number of sparks per page.

Discussion:

- Which page had the most sparks?
- How many different-looking sparks are there in total? Find the pure white spark that makes it to Mother Earth on page 24, and into the hearts of the African Animals on page 25.



CATCH-M Scavenger Hunt

Reinforce number sequencing and visual recognition with a movement-based math game.

Materials:

- Cut-out paper CATCH-M sparks numbered 1–6 (several of each) Color them the six basic colors of the rainbow: red-1, orange-2, yellow-3, green-4, blue-5, and purple-6.
- Create one special **rainbow spark** that represents love’s chose to do good—“Big Bang”!
- Tape or hide around the room

Steps:

1. Students search the room to find a full set: one of each number (1–6).
2. If they find a duplicate, they leave it for someone else.
3. First to find a complete sequence wins!

Bonus: If someone finds the rainbow spark, they earn a “Big Bang!” prize or classroom cheer.



Infinity and Doing Good

Introduce the concept of **infinity** by discussing the number 8 sideways: ∞ . Explain that it represents the wonder of something that goes on and on forever, like love, kindness, and bravery! It represents a concept, not a specific mathematical number.

Steps:

1. Look up the word in the dictionary (teacher- or student-led).
2. Show students the infinity symbol (∞) and ask them to identify where it begins or ends. It never ends. It is boundless and continue to go, grow, and give, like love, kindness, or brave actions.
3. Practice drawing it in the air, on paper with crayons or markers, or walk out its shape playing follow the leader.



Create: Infinite Ideas to Shine Together

- Brainstorm as a class: “What are some ways we can do good and spread love like CATCH-M?”
- Have each student draw or list **8 ways** they can do good.
 - Smile at someone
 - Help a friend
 - Recycle
 - Say “thank you.”
 - Include someone new to sit at your table, etc.
- Create posters or mini books titled “**Our Infinite Ideas to Shine and Do Good**” to display around the classroom.

Extension:

- Write a poem or short story based on one of their “infinite good” actions.

Science Connections

The science activities below help students explore natural wonders, emotional regulation, and our connection to the universe. These lessons align with concepts in astronomy, biology, mindfulness, and ecosystems, all sparked by the themes in *Live Big with CATCH-M*.



We Are Made of Star-Stuff

Inspired by the famous astronomer Carl Sagan’s quote, “We are made of star-stuff. There are pieces of star within us all...Every one of us is, in the cosmic perspective, precious.” In *Live Big with CATCH-M*, CATCH-M represents the star-stuff within us all. This activity helps students explore the idea that humans are made from the same elements as the stars—connecting us to the universe and each other in a powerful way.

Steps:

1. Class Discussion:

- What do you think it means to be made of “star-stuff”?
- How does it make you feel to know you’re made of the same elements of a star? What does it say about your value, and your extraordinary reason to be?
- Explain the astronomically low odds of any one individual being born—an estimated 1 in 400 trillion chance. The fact that each of us was ever born, CATCH-M calls it “miraculous, marvelous, and magical!”

2. Mini-Research:

- With teacher support, explore the idea that stars and humans are made of the same basic elements, like hydrogen, helium, oxygen, and carbon.

3. Creative Reflection:

- Give each student a **star-shaped cutout**.
- Ask them to decorate it with words, symbols, or pictures that represent what makes them shine from the inside out or what extraordinary ways they can do good in the world, too.

4. Class Display:

- Create a bulletin board titled: **“We Are Made of Star-Stuff”** featuring decorated stars and Carl Sagan’s quote.



Om, Om, Om Breathing

CATCH-M uses intentional breathing to calm fear and loneliness and connect to love, imagination, and emotional regulation. The science of breathing demonstrates that breathing is not just an automatic function, but a powerful tool for influencing physical and mental well-being.

Invite students to practice calming, deep breaths and reflect on their internal state.

Steps:

1. Have students sit comfortably with their eyes open or closed.
2. Guide them to:
 - Breathe in slowly through the nose
 - Exhale gently through the mouth while softly saying: “Om”
 - Repeat three times

3. Reflection:

- How did your body feel before, during, and after?
- Did any emotions or thoughts change?

4. Drawing or Writing:

- Have students write or draw how breathing can strengthen their braveheart.
- Younger students can color in emoji faces or draw body parts that feel tight, calm, or different.

- Older students can write a few sentences about how breathing made them feel.

Discussion Prompts:

- Why do you think breathing is important when you feel scared, overwhelmed, or alone, like CATCH-M at the start of the story?
- How do you think breathing helps you find your braveheart?

Extension:

Use this “Om Moment” as a grounding practice before transitions, story time, or tests.



The African Savanna

The animals in *Live Big with CATCH-M* live in the African savanna. Learning about our world helps students understand the book’s setting and its connection to the story. Albert Einstein, a famous scientist, said, “Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better.”

Steps:

1. Locate the Setting:

- Use a world map to find East Africa and the Great Rift Valley.
- Point out that this is home to cheetahs, zebras, and many other remarkable animals.

2. Research in Pairs or Groups:

- Assign teams to study:
 - Cheetah behavior: speed, camouflage, family structure
 - Zebra behavior: herds, communication, fear responses

3. Literary Connection:

- Why do you think the author chose a cheetah and a zebra for the story?
- How do their real-life behaviors relate to the story’s themes of fear and bravery?

- How do they help each other “shine”?

Optional Extension:

Create a class “Field Guide” with animal facts, illustrations, and fun facts about the savanna animals in the book.

Social Studies & Community

These lessons explore how each of us plays a vital role in the world, just like the characters in *Live Big with CATCH-M*. Students will reflect on their dreams, values, and how they can “do good” in their communities, too.



The Constellation of Us

Each person is a star, the star of their story with a dream, and together we form a constellation of love, kindness, courage, and creativity.

Objective: Celebrate our individuality and shared dreams while creating a collaborative class constellation—a visual representation that highlights how we are better together.

Steps:

1. Partner Interviews:

Students pair up and take turns asking:

- What is a dream or goal you want to achieve?
- What’s something you’re passionate about?
- What makes you feel extraordinary?

2. Create a Star:

- On a star-shaped cutout, each student writes their partner’s name and dream.
- Decorate it with colors or symbols that represent their personality and goal.

3. Build the Constellation:

- Display all the stars on a bulletin board titled: **“The Constellation of Us”**.

- Use yarn, chalk, or string to connect stars with shared dreams or similar passions (e.g., future scientists, helpers, or athletes).

4. Reflection:

- What did you learn about your classmates' dreams?
- How does it feel to be part of a constellation of stars?
- What do our connections say about the power of community?



Helping Others Shine

In the story, CATCH-M and his friends become stars in each other's stories by shining and sharing love, support, and encouragement. We can do the same in our everyday lives.

Objective: Explore what it means to be a kind and supportive friend through role-playing and real-life applications.

Steps:

1. Class Discussion:

- What does it mean to be "the star in someone else's story"?
- How can we help empower others to shine?

2. Chart It Out:

- Create a chart with two columns of actions that help others shine:
 - **Compliments / Uplifting Actions** (Examples: kindness, listening, sharing, caring, helping with a task, or standing up for a friend.)
 - **Put-downs / Hurtful Actions**
- Work as a class to brainstorm examples for each column. Talk about how compliments can help others feel and be better, and how put-downs can make others feel alone and unhappy.

3. Define and Discuss:

- What is a **compliment**?

- What is a **put-down**?
- How do each of these make people feel?
- Why does an encouraging compliment help someone feel loved or brave?

4. Application:

- Role-play simple classroom scenarios:
 - Someone is left out at recess.
 - A classmate feels nervous before presenting.
 - A friend is sad after making a mistake.
- Ask: How could you help them shine?

5. Compliment Relay:

- Ask students to sit in a circle on the floor or in chairs.
- The objective of the game is to pass compliments around the circle.
- One player will give a compliment to the player sitting to his or her right, who will say, "Thank you," and pass a compliment to the next player, and so on.

Tip: Give a couple of examples of a compliment like,
 "I like the way you always hold the door open,"
 "Thank you ____." or "You're really good at____,"
 "Thank you for____."

Many players will try to compliment physical characteristics but try to steer them away from that and have players focus on complimenting "do good" actions.

The game ends when the relay has gone around the circle once. To do a second round, students should change seats. Challenge them by telling them to use a new compliment.



My Dream Journal

Invites students to think about their hopes, dreams, and the experiences that they want to have in their lives.

Create a journal to provide them a space to capture these big ideas with both words and art. On each page, have students use their imagination to draw a picture of a dream, a hope, or an experience. Then write a sentence at the bottom of the page describing the picture.

Materials:

- White printer paper (internal pages)
- Cardstock or decorative paper (for covers)
- Crayons, markers, pencils
- Stickers, glue, glitter (optional)
- Stapler and duct tape or washi tape

Steps:

1. Create the Journal:

- Fold several blank pages in half and place inside a folded cardstock cover.
- Staple along the folded edge, then cover the staples with decorative tape.

2. Decorate the Cover:

- Let students personalize their journal covers with drawings, magazine cutouts, stickers, etc.
- Add the title: **"My Dream Journal"**

3. Dream Entries:

- On each page, students draw a picture of one dream, goal, or experience.
- Write one sentence to describe the dream (e.g., "I want to help animals," or "I dream of being an artist.")

4. Share (Optional):

- Invite students to share a favorite journal page with a partner or the class.
- Display journals in a designated classroom corner or on the “Dream Big Together” shelf.