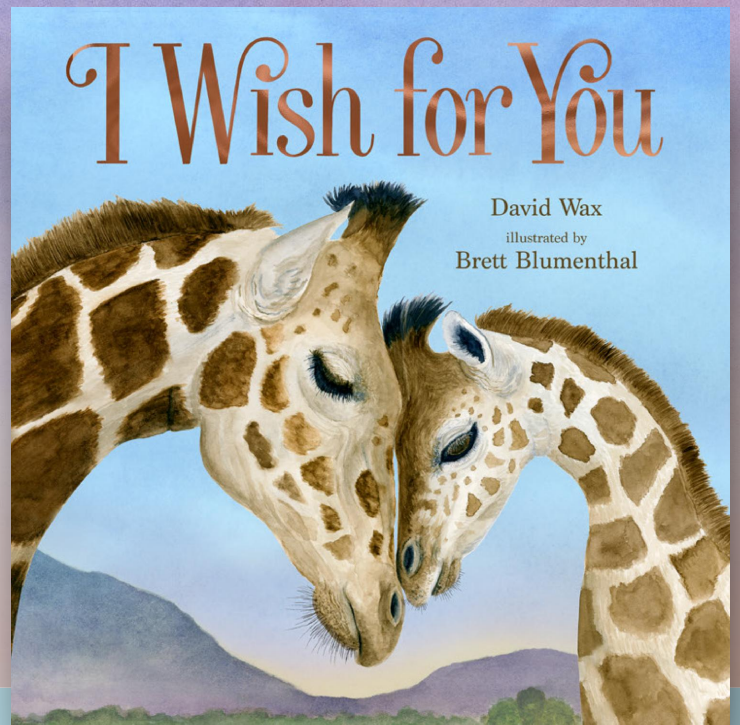


# I Wish for You

David Wax

illustrated by  
Brett Blumenthal

ISBN: 978-1250822185  
Pre-K - 5th Grade / Ages 4 - 11



## SEL / VALUES TEACHING GUIDE

### ABOUT THE BOOK

*I Wish for You* is a Children's Book exploring the values we hope our children adopt, and how they can be learned from the amazing creatures on this planet. From courageous lions and wise owls to playful dolphins and wolves finding their voices, *I Wish for You* explores the values we can draw from the wondrous and amazing creatures on this planet. Gentle and affirming, the lyrical text takes readers through the qualities we wish to instill in our children, helping them grow into resilient, assured, and happy individuals. *I Wish for You* is both a celebration of nature as well as a love letter to a child.

### ABOUT THE SEL / VALUES TEACHING GUIDE

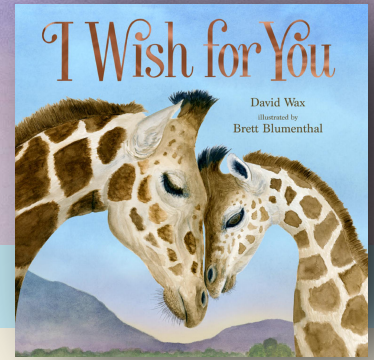
In *I Wish for You* we discuss twelve different values that we feel are important in building a child's confidence, happiness, and purposefulness. The SEL / Values Teaching guide provides a wonderful way to introduce the twelve values to your students and is a perfect supplement to any Social-Emotional Learning curriculum you may already be using. We encourage you to use this guide to discuss the values with your students and how they can begin to incorporate them into everyday life to drive positive change in their lives. For those of you who may use the *Responsive Classroom* Morning Meeting program, this guide would fit nicely into that format. Please note that this is just a guide. Some activities and questions may not be age appropriate for all students, so please feel free to modify as you see fit.

### HOW TO USE THE SEL / VALUES TEACHING GUIDE

Read *I Wish for You* in its entirety to students. Use the vocabulary section to help students gain a better understanding of the different values discussed. Then choose one of the values and reread the passage from the book that directly relates to that value. Use the questions provided as a framework for a discussion. Feel free to add or eliminate questions as you see fit. Once the discussion is complete, have students complete one or all of the activities for that value. Although we recommend spending one week on each value, if you want to make lessons shorter, we urge you to spend at least one day per value to ensure that students gain a solid understanding of their meaning.

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### VOCABULARY

The following vocabulary words are a great way to introduce the values in *I Wish for You* to students. Discuss the meaning of each.

- Freedom
- Unique/Uniqueness
- Fun/Playfulness
- Kind/Kindness
- Friend/Friendship
- Strength
- Confidence
- Clever/Cleverness
- Self-Expression
- Wise/Wisdom
- Leader/Leadership
- Family

### VOCABULARY ACTIVITIES

1. **Chalk Chats:** Have students write the twelve values in chalk along sidewalks or on school pathways. This hopefully will spark conversations among other students at the school.
2. **Monday Moments:** Each Monday, have students write an “I am \_\_\_\_\_” statement and have them fill in the blank with one of the values (E.g., I am Strong). Have students take turns explaining why they chose that value to describe themselves.
3. **Frayer Model:** Use the Frayer Model to reinforce vocabulary. The Frayer Model is a graphic organizer for building student vocabulary. Create a chart divided into 4 sections. Each section should have a heading or label that includes a variation of the word’s definition, attributes, characteristics, synonyms, examples, antonyms, or non-examples. For more info, go to: <https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/frayer-model>



### FREEDOM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

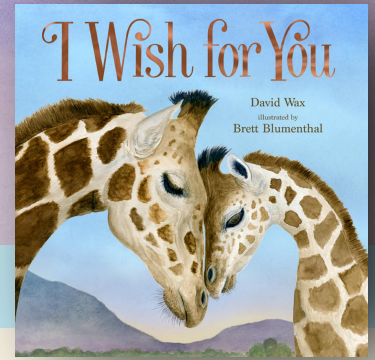
1. What does Freedom mean to you?
2. What freedom do you have that you value the most?
3. How do you think freedom and responsibility are connected?
4. What do you believe are your basic freedoms?
5. What freedoms do you have in school? At home? In your community?

### FREEDOM ACTIVITIES

1. **Symbols of Freedom:** Have students draw a symbol that they believe represents freedom. Ask them to explain why they chose that symbol.
2. **Freedoms and Beyond:** Discuss with your students the 4 freedoms: Freedom of speech, Freedom of religion, Freedom from want and Freedom from fear. Then divide students into groups of four and ask each group to list out other freedoms they believe are important and why (E.g., love, choice, etc.). Once they are done making their lists, have them create a drawing that represents the freedoms they listed.

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### PLAYFULNESS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What does it mean to have fun and to be playful?
2. What is your favorite way to have fun?
3. Why do you think it is important to have fun?
4. What do you think happens when you don't have enough fun in your life?

### PLAYFULNESS ACTIVITIES

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1. **What's Fun to Me:** Have students create a video montage or image book of all the things they find fun. For older children, ask them to write a few sentences of who and what makes the activities fun.
2. **Teacher Flip:** Instead of teaching in your normal way for a lesson, ask students for ideas on ways to make the lesson more fun and playful. Another option: have students take turns acting as the teacher for five to ten minutes during the class.



### KINDNESS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Why is it important to be kind?
2. Who has recently been kind to you?
3. In what ways do you show kindness?
4. What do you think the world would look like if there were no kind people?

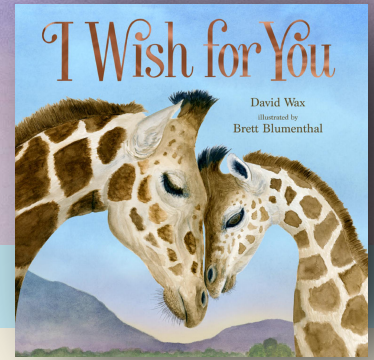
### KINDNESS ACTIVITIES

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1. **Kindness Jar:** Fill a jar with slips of paper that have acts of kindness that anyone can do written on them. Throughout the week, have students select a slip from the jar to perform one of the acts of kindness towards a classmate, teacher or staff member.
2. **Praise for Kindness Jar:** Make a kindness jar for the classroom. When a student does anything thoughtful and kind, write it on a slip of paper and put it into the jar with their name on it. If students are old enough, they can do this instead for their fellow classmates. This is a visual reminder for students to see how kind they are. At the end of each week, month or semester, remove the slips of paper and read them out loud to acknowledge and remember the kind act. (As an alternative, make a jar for each student.)

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### FRIENDSHIP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What does friendship mean to you?
2. What qualities are important when looking for a friend?
3. What are the qualities that you possess that make you a good friend?

### FRIENDSHIP ACTIVITIES

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1. **Me, too Game:** Gather the class into a circle. Have students take turns standing in the center and sharing a fact about themselves, such as, the color of their hair, or favorite color or animal. If other students share that thing, they should stand up and shout, "Me, too!"
2. **The Compliment Game:** Put student names in a hat or bowl. Have students sit in a circle and pick out a name from the hat. Then have the student compliment or share something they like about the student they picked.



### STRENGTH DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What does it mean to be strong?
2. What do you think we should use our strength for?
3. Have you ever had a situation when you needed to be strong?
4. Have you ever had a situation when you wish you had more strength? Why?
5. How do you think you can become stronger?

### STRENGTH ACTIVITIES

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1. **Goal Activity:** Have students write down a goal. Then have each student write down or talk about the steps they need to take to reach the goal. Once they've made their list, have students create a vision/dream board to help them visualize and achieve their goal.
2. **Strength Interviews:** Have students interview parents, grandparents or neighbors who worked hard towards achieving a long-term goal. This can be done through video or as a written assignment.



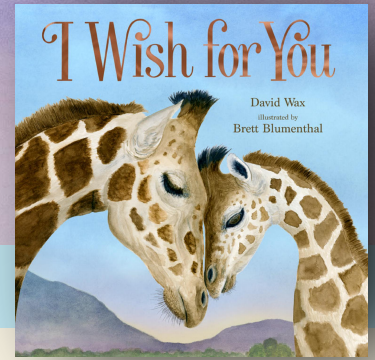
### CONFIDENCE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. What does confidence look like?   | 3. Do you think you're confident?                 |
| 2. How does it feel to be confident? | 4. In what ways do you think you show confidence? |

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### CONFIDENCE ACTIVITIES

1. **Mirror, Mirror:** Have students draw a picture of themselves. Then have students label their drawing with the things they believe make them awesome or an incredible human being.
2. **Past, Present, Future:** Have students make a chart and divide it into three sections: Past, Present, Future. Starting with the “Past” section, have students list all their accomplishments they’ve made so far. In the “Now” section, have them list the things they’re currently accomplishing. Finally, in the “Future” section, have students list the accomplishments they want to achieve in the future.
3. **Reframing:** Have students make three columns on a sheet of paper with the following headings: “Negative Thoughts,” “My Feelings,” and “My Thoughts Reframed.” In the 1<sup>st</sup> column, have students write down any negative thoughts about themselves or a situation (E.g., I stink at baseball). In the 2<sup>nd</sup> column, have students list how they feel about that negative thought (E.g., It makes me feel useless). Finally, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> column have students reframe the thought in a more positive way. (E.g., I am learning how to play baseball and will get better with practice.)



### UNIQUE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

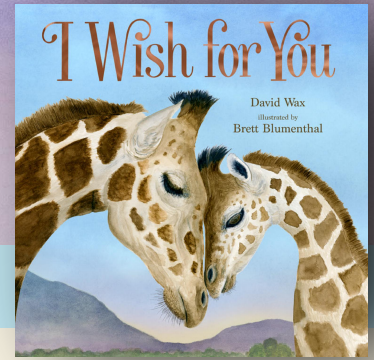
1. Do you think being unique is a valuable trait? Why?
2. What makes you unique?
3. What do you like most about yourself and how can this be used to be a good friend? A good family member?
4. How do you feel about having friends who are different than you?
5. What do you think it would be like if all of your friends looked and acted just like you?

### UNIQUE ACTIVITIES

1. **Fingerprints:** Have students trace their hands onto a piece of paper, then use washable ink pads to add a print of each finger onto their drawing. After each child has had the chance to wash up, have them observe their newly created prints. Provide students with magnifying glasses so they can study their fingerprints and ask them to notice how each fingerprint is unique from the other. Have them look at their classmates’ fingerprints, as well.
2. **I’m Unique Because:** Have each student make a drawing of themselves and then list traits that make them unique around their drawing. Remind students that unique qualities can be other than physical traits (E.g., They are musical, they play soccer, etc.).
3. **Sticky Note Reminders:** Have students write down what makes them unique on a sticky note (E.g., I am unique because I am thoughtful.). Have them place it somewhere on their desk to remind them throughout the day of what makes them unique and special.

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### CLEVERNESS DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What do you think it means to be clever?
2. What makes you clever?
3. What is a recent example of how you demonstrated cleverness?

### CLEVERNESS ACTIVITIES

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1. **Inventor, Creator, Dreamer:** Have students bring in everyday items or recycled materials from home. Ask students to think of a new way to do something. Using the items they brought in, have them build, draw and/or write about their invention.
2. **Go Your Own Way:** Provide students with a map with a highlighted route from Point A to Point B. Have students then find other routes that are shorter, longer, curvier, or any other version that may be of interest.



### SELF-EXPRESSION DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. Why do you think it is important to have an independent voice?
2. What are good ways to share your thoughts, feelings or opinions?
3. What can you do to encourage others to feel okay in voicing their opinions, thoughts or feelings?

### SELF-EXPRESSION ACTIVITIES

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1. **Yes and No, must go!:** Gather students for a read-a-loud. At the end of the story, ask students open ended questions about the story, eliminating the “Yes” or “No” automatic response. Try to engage every student to ensure each gets a turn to speak.
2. **Story Chain:** Have students sit in a circle. Begin with the student whose birthday is closest to the current date. Have the student start a story with a single sentence. Then move to the next student in the circle and have them add to the story with another sentence. Continue this until you have gone around the entire circle at least one time.



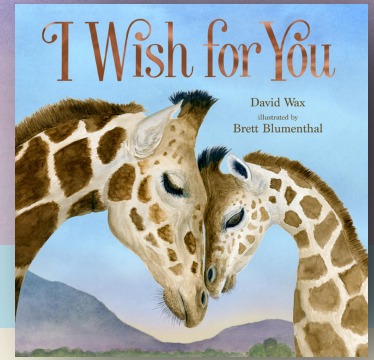
### WISDOM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What do you think makes a person wise?
2. Do you think wisdom is something you are born with?
3. Who do you know that you believe to be wise? Why do you think so?

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## SEL / VALUES TEACHING GUIDE

### WISDOM ACTIVITIES

1. **Would You Rather:** Create a list of “Would you rather” scenarios from which students have a choice of two options. Let students take turns expressing which they’d rather do or be, and then explain why. Here are some examples: Would you rather be an elephant or an ant? Would you rather be tall or smart? Would you rather have supersonic hearing or sight?
2. **Gift Roulette:** Take five empty gift boxes and fill one with candy, stickers, or anything your students might enjoy. Then wrap the gift box very simply. Keep the remaining four gift boxes empty and wrap them really pretty and fancy with bows, ribbon, etc.. Have each student write down which gift they’d choose and why. Ask for one volunteer per gift and have them come up to explain why they chose their gift. Then have each of the volunteers open their present one by one so all can see. Explain that some choices we make may look good on the surface, but in the end may not be the best choice. (E.g., instant gratification, judging a book by its cover, etc.)



### LEADERSHIP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

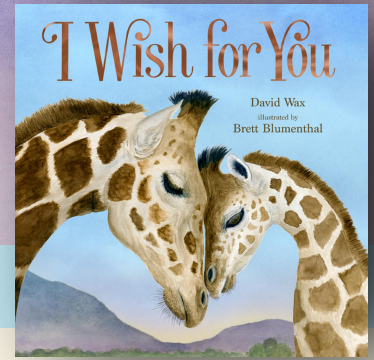
1. What makes someone a good leader?
2. Why do you think people are willing to follow a good leader?
3. Do you have anyone in your life who you think is a good leader?

### LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

1. **Highest Creation:** Have students bring in recycled and everyday items from home. You can also provide everyday items, such as empty toilet paper or paper towel rolls, popsicle sticks, toothpicks, wooden blocks, uncooked pasta and so on. Divide students into pairs and have each team build their highest possible structure from the materials provided.
2. **Lead the Pack:** Take students outside and divide them into two groups. Designate a leader for each group and explain that each group will be designing an obstacle course for the opposite team. The leader of the opposite team will have to lead their team through the obstacle course with all team members, except the leader, blind-folded. Whichever team gets through the obstacle course first wins.
  - a. **Design:** Have the leader of each team delegate roles to team members. Have teams collect natural materials to design and build their obstacle course. Make sure they designate a Starting Point and a Finishing Point.
  - b. **Activity:** Have team leaders blindfold the opposite team’s members. If students are too young to do this, do it for them. Then have leaders lead their group from the starting point to the finish by giving accurate directions, remaining calm, and guiding the group to reach the finish point first. The team to reach the finish point first wins. Ensure obstacles aren’t a threat to the safety of the children.

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### FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does family mean to you?
2. What is your favorite quality about your family?
3. Why do you think it's important to be close to your family members?

### FAMILY ACTIVITIES

1. **Picture This:** Have students draw a picture of their family. Then have them write a couple of sentences about what they love most about each family member.
2. **Making Memories:** Have each student spend part of their weekend doing an activity together with their entire family. The activity should not include screen time (E.g., Board Games, Cards, Cooking, Puzzles, Hiking, etc.). Have students take photos, print them out and bring them into school. While in school, have students create a memory book of their experience. Students should write a short description of the activity they did with their family, and how they felt spending that time together with their family members. Some questions they can answer: What was the activity? What was their favorite part? Why? How did they feel spending time with their family? Finally, have students label and caption all of the photos.



**DAVID WAX** and **BRETT BLUMENTHAL** are the husband and wife team behind *I Wish for You*. David's a consultant and a creative who enjoys time with his family and dreaming of ways to make the world a better place. Brett is the International Bestselling author of the *52 Small Changes* series and the artist behind Tiny Toes Design. Passionate about wildlife, animals and the environment, Brett uses her art to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity. You can find her artwork at [www.tinytoesdesign.com](http://www.tinytoesdesign.com)

David and Brett live in Charlotte, NC and are proud parents to their son, Alexander, and two furbabies: Dakota (Dog) and DaVinci (Cat).



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