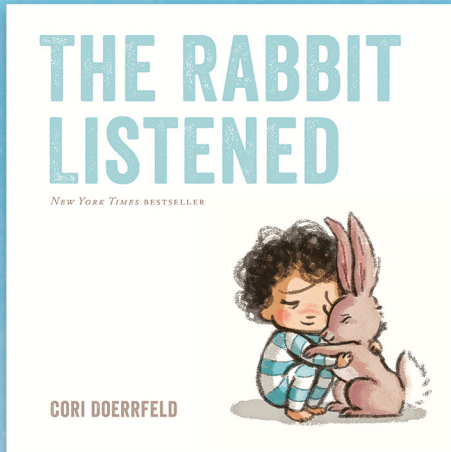
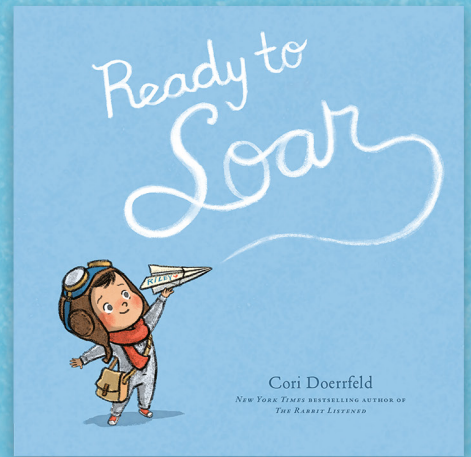
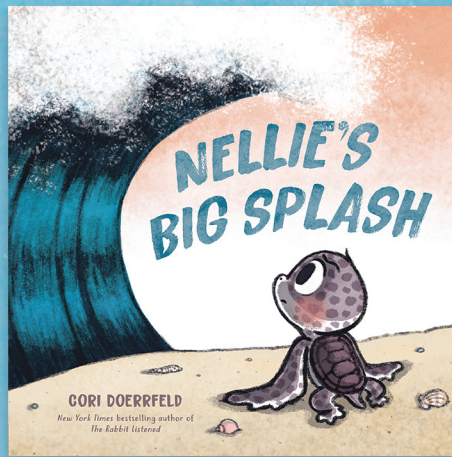


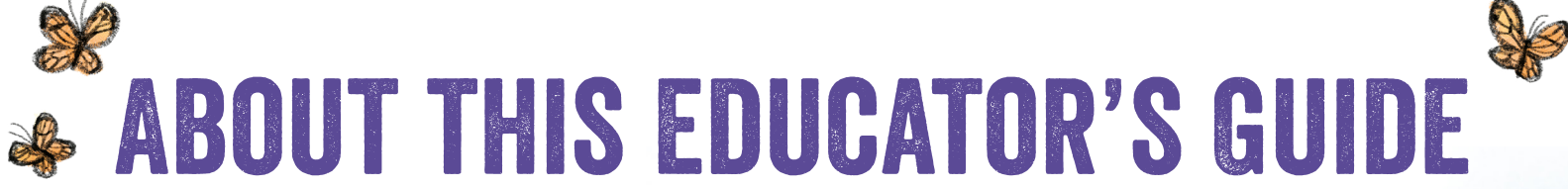
TEACHING LIFE'S (BIG AND SMALL) LESSONS

with **CORI DOERRFELD**



A Guide for Educators
About ALL THE FEELS





ABOUT THIS EDUCATOR'S GUIDE

Whether you are just discovering Cori Doerrfeld's texts featured in this collection or if you are already a fan, you will most certainly open the pages of these books with your readers to find that rich opportunities for discussion about life's big and small lessons await. With delightful, charming illustrations and soft, inviting text to match, each of the four books featured in this social and emotional learning text set will empower young people and their adults to engage in discussions about the characters' experiences and their own experiences, too.

This guide includes discussion questions to support those conversations grounded in the five core competencies of **SEL**: self-awareness, self-management, decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness. You may choose to use these questions as written or to modify the questions for your individual needs. Remember that social and emotional learning is always personal, therefore it is important that you are responsive to the learners before you, providing them more or different support as you see fit.

About Author & Illustrator Cori Doerrfeld

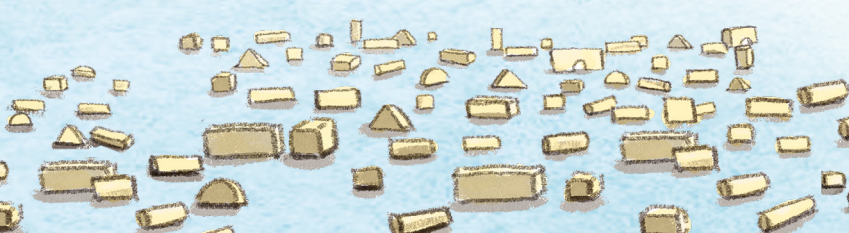
Cori Doerrfeld lives in Minneapolis, MN, with her husband and two children. She received her undergraduate degree in studio art from St. Olaf College and her postbaccalaureate degree from the Minneapolis College of Art and Design.

Learn more at her website,
<https://www.coridoerrfeld.com>.



Prepared by **Melissa Guerrette, M.Ed., NBCT.**

Melissa Guerrette, a National Board Certified Teacher in western Maine, has 23 years of experience in grades 4-6. Melissa spreads book love by helping others learn about themselves and others by connecting through story, which seeps into her involvement with local and state initiatives related to reading communities, teacher leadership, and social justice. Her professional passion is empowering students and helping them uncover their individuality—as readers, writers, and as people—for themselves. You can find Melissa on socials at @msguerrette.





THE RABBIT LISTENED

A NCTE Charlotte Huck Recommended Book
Selected for 14 State Award Reading Lists and Counting!

★ “THIS APPEALING WORK IS AN EXCELLENT ADDITION TO ANY EMOTIONAL-INTELLIGENCE SHELF.”

—KIRKUS REVIEWS, STARRED REVIEW



About the Book

When something sad happens, Taylor doesn't know where to turn. All the animals are sure they have the answer. The chicken wants to talk it out, but Taylor doesn't feel like chatting. The bear thinks Taylor should get angry, but that's not quite right either. One by one the animals try to tell Taylor how to act, and one by one they fail to offer comfort. Then the rabbit arrives. All the rabbit does is listen . . . which is just what Taylor needs.

With its spare, poignant text and irresistibly sweet illustration, *The Rabbit Listened* is about how to comfort and support the people in your life, by taking the time to carefully, lovingly, gently listen.

Overarching Themes

The Rabbit Listened features the following themes:

- managing feelings
- holding space
- patience
- healing

Before Reading Questions

- Have you ever felt big feelings because something unexpected happened?
- What feelings did you have, and how did they change?

Ideas for Implementation

- Introduce, supplement, or extend SEL lessons in units about empathy and emotion management.
- This book is a staple for whenever something difficult—often unexpected—has happened and students have a range of responses; this could be something in the local community or something that makes national news. It supports important talks about being patient and understanding, emphasizing that everyone will have different emotions at different times, and how we can take care of each other and have big feelings, too.



THE RABBIT LISTENED (CONTINUED)

After Reading

Self-Awareness:

- What did Taylor need? Who helped Taylor?

Self-Management:

- What does Taylor's story teach us about handling our emotions and challenges? Why is it important for us to ask for what we need?

Decision-Making:

- When Taylor talks to the rabbit at the end of the story, They unload lots of options for acting on their feelings. What possible solutions does Taylor name? What does Taylor eventually decide to do to handle the problem? In your opinion, does Taylor make a good decision?

Relationship Skills:

- Is there an animal in the book that represents how you want to react? Why? How can you remember to be more like the rabbit?

Social Awareness:

- What was so significant about how the rabbit approached Taylor compared to the other animals' approaches? What does this teach us about dealing with friends who have big feelings?

PAIR WITH THESE OTHER TEXTS

Just What to Do, by Kyle Lukoff,
illustrated by Hala Tahboub

A Shelter for Sadness, by Anne Booth,
illustrated by David Litchfield

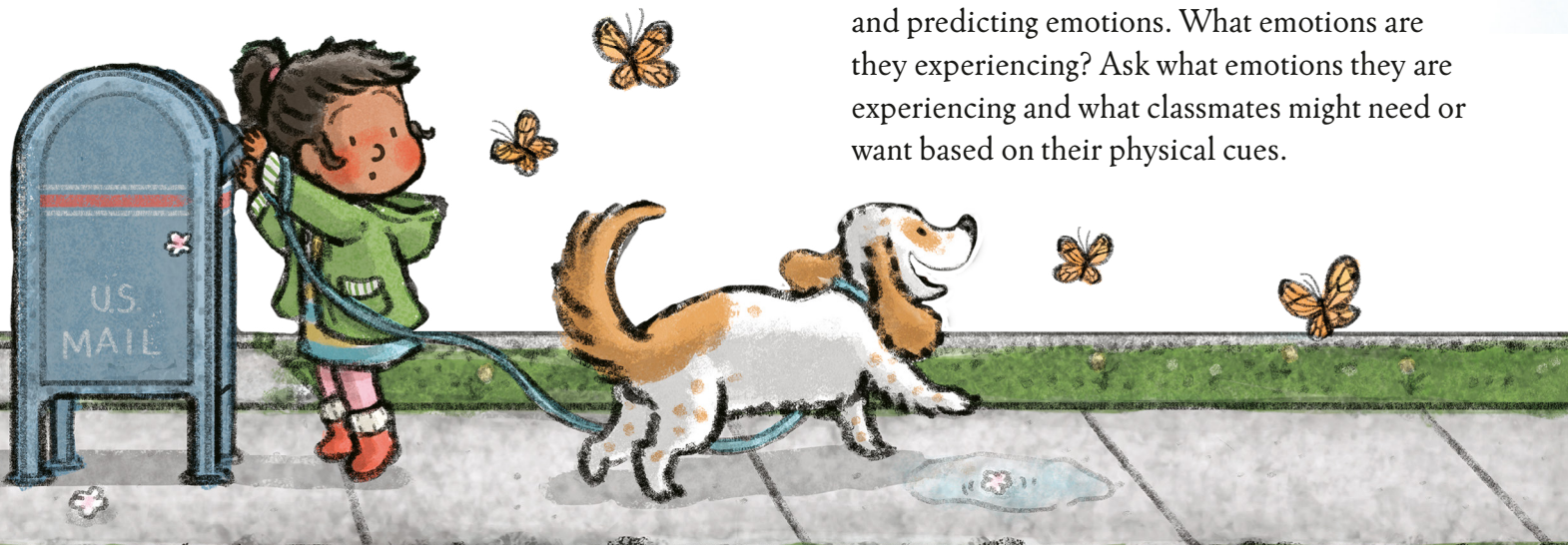
Big Feelings, by Alexandra Penfold,
illustrated by Suzanne Kaufman

Allie All Along, by Sarah Lynne Reul



Activities & Extensions

- Think about three ways you can be a good listener. Write a thank-you note to someone who has been a great listener for you at some time in your life.
- Play variations of charades drawing emphasis to body language and facial expressions in order to help students practice reading cues and predicting emotions. What emotions are they experiencing? Ask what emotions they are experiencing and what classmates might need or want based on their physical cues.





GOODBYE, FRIEND! HELLO, FRIEND!



A Charlotte Zolotow Award Highly Commended Selection

★ “We’ve seen treatments of friendship loss before, but this turns that story into A TENDER AND FRIENDLY EXPLORATION OF LIFE’S BALANCE, deftly escalating from matter-of-fact changes to harder ones.”

—THE BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN’S BOOKS, STARRED REVIEW

About the Book

Change and transitions are hard, but *Goodbye, Friend! Hello, Friend!* demonstrates how when one experience ends, it opens the door for another to begin. It follows two best friends as they say goodbye to snowmen and hello to stomping in puddles. They say goodbye to long walks, butterflies, and the sun . . . and hello to long evening talks, fireflies, and the stars.

But the hardest goodbye of all comes when one of the friends has to move away. Feeling alone isn’t easy, and sometimes new beginnings take time. But even the hardest days come to an end, and you never know what tomorrow will bring.

Before Reading Questions

- What are some things that have an end or go away? What things come after those endings? Be prepared to give an example, like after winter ends, spring will come or after the school year ends, summer vacation will come.
- Why is it hard when some things end? What makes it easier? Sometimes new beginnings take time. But even the hardest days come to an end, and you never know what tomorrow will bring.

Overarching Themes

Goodbye, Friend! Hello, Friend! features the following themes:

- letting go
- dealing with changes
- transitions
- resilience and outlook/mindset

Ideas for Implementation

- Introduce, supplement, or extend SEL lessons in units about emotion management.
- **End of the Year:** Use this book as a springboard to discuss the upsides of ending one amazing year of learning together and the optimism of looking forward to summer vacation and a new school year full of learning and problem-solving.
- **Changing Classroom Dynamics:** This book could support conversation about transitions when adding a new classmate or having to say goodbye to a classmate who is moving away midyear.



GOODBYE, FRIEND! HELLO, FRIEND!

(CONTINUED)

After Reading

Self-Awareness:

- How do Stella and Charlie show that handling your emotions around changes and transitions is a matter of your outlook? Find an example of a goodbye where the friends could choose to focus on sad emotions but instead look at things with a lens of gratitude or possibility.

Self-Management:

- How does choosing to see goodbyes as an open door for a new beginning (or a hello!) help you be resilient?

Responsible Decision-Making:

- What does Stella do to deal with her feelings and promote personal well-being after Charlie moves away?

Relationship Skills:

- Stella and Charlie seem to make the goodbyes and hellos much smoother for one another. What kind of friend makes it easier to handle changes and challenges that come with goodbyes and hellos? Describe the characteristics of that type of friend.

Social Awareness:

- How does Stella show us we can be grateful for both endings AND beginnings?

PAIR WITH THESE OTHER TEXTS

The End Is Just the Beginning, by Mike Bender, illustrated by Diana Mayo

Bad Bye, Good Bye, by Deborah Underwood, illustrated by Jonathan Bean

Saturday, by Oge Mora

The Creature of Habit, by Jennifer E. Smith, illustrated by Leo Espinosa



Activities & Extensions

- Write about a time when you had to end or say goodbye to one thing in order to start or say hello to something new. How did you feel before and after?
- What other analogies, like saying hello and goodbye, can you and your friends think of to starting and ending things? Make a poster with artwork to illustrate your ideas.





READY TO SOAR

An Iowa Goldfinch Award Selection

“Employing narrative and visual rhythms similar to *The Rabbit Listened*, Doerrfeld once again considers the process of FINDING ONE’S WAY, only this time, explores heeding voices—inner and otherwise—that say, ‘WOO! YOU GOT THIS.’”

—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

About the Book

Riley made a paper airplane and couldn’t wait to let it soar. But just before the plane could take off—SQUAWK. An eagle swoops in and insists Riley’s plane could never fly. It’s much too small. So Riley makes it bigger! But just as this bigger paper airplane is ready to go, a parrot squawks that the plane is way too boring to fly. So Riley makes it fancier! Bird after bird offers advice, and Riley tries making the airplane faster, longer, taller, and slimmer.

When the plane crashes to the ground after all these changes, Riley finally meets a more supportive friend and rediscovers the joy and wonder of soaring.

Overarching Themes

Ready to Soar features the following themes:

- confidence and self-assuredness
- handling feedback/criticism
- individuality
- supporting others
- perseverance and trying again

Before Reading Questions

Have you ever had an experience when you worked really hard on something and thought it was complete, and then you got feedback at the last minute from several people that it needed more work? How did—or how would—that make you feel? Would you be interested in that feedback, or would you feel frustrated with the last-minute changes?

Ideas for Implementation

- Introduce, supplement, or extend SEL lessons about being assertive, accepting differences, and/or handling peer pressure.
- Use to support students as they learn how to provide and receive helpful, constructive feedback. Riley’s experience with the airplane provides an opportunity to consider both what we desire when giving feedback as well as how we, as creators, have the ultimate choice about what feedback to use and how.
- **National Paper Airplane Day:** May 26





READY TO SOAR

(CONTINUED)

After Reading Questions

Self-Awareness:

- What feelings did Riley experience? How did Riley's feelings change from the start to the middle to the end of the book? What power or influence did the birds' words have on Riley's confidence about launching the plane?

Self-Management:

- How did Riley handle the setback when their plane crashed after making all of the birds' modifications? Did Riley quit and give up?

Decision-Making Skills:

- Why do you think Riley listened to the advice of the birds so quickly? How might the outcome have been different if Riley had slowed their decision-making to consider the options and possible results of modifying their airplane instead of making all of the changes that were suggested?

Relationship Skills:

- Do you think the birds in the book were good friends to Riley? Why or why not? What do the birds teach us about how we can support our friends?

Social Awareness:

- How was what the penguin said and did different from the other birds' actions? How did the penguin recognize Riley's strengths and recognize Riley as a non-bird creator? How did the penguin celebrate Riley and their take off?

PAIR WITH THESE OTHER TEXTS

Rock What Ya Got (& Rock it A Lot), by Samantha Berger, illustrated by Kerascoët

Where Oliver Fits, by Cale Atkinson

The Most Magnificent Thing, by Ashley Spires

I Am Enough, by Grace Byers, illustrated by Keturah A. Bobo



Activities & Extensions

Build and test your own paper airplanes. Experiment with changing different variables of your plane to see if you can make your plane fly farther and/or faster. Be careful to only make ONE change at a time in order to keep track of what difference each change makes!

Roleplay how to give feedback. Generate sentence stems as a class that could be used to keep feedback positive and constructive when making suggestions and providing ideas to one another. Some possible sentence stems to start with might include:

- Have you considered . . .
- Another idea you might try is . . .



NELLIE'S BIG SPLASH

“A lovely tale of FINDING COURAGE WHEN EMBRACING NEW ADVENTURES, just right for the early elementary shelves.”

—*SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL*

About the Book

When Nellie the sea turtle hatched, she was on a beach surrounded by lots of her brothers and sisters. Soon all the other turtles joyfully ran into the ocean and swam away, but Nellie? She was too scared. The ocean was loud, it was deep, and it was unknown. She stayed on the safe, dry sand instead.

But when night starts to fall and it gets too dark and cold for a tiny little sea turtle on land, Nellie realizes that if she looks past the scary crashing waves, there's actually a whole world out there just waiting for her to jump in.

Overarching Themes

Nellie's Big Splash features the following themes:

- risk-taking
- facing fears
- courage and self-confidence

Before Reading Questions

What does it mean to make a “big splash”?

Ideas for Implementation

- Introduce, supplement, or extend SEL lessons in units about emotion management.
- **Back to School:** This book could be a great way to talk with students about starting fresh when a new school year seems intimidating and apprehension looms.
- **National Face Your Fears Day:** October 14
- **End of the Year:** This book could be a send-off story, reminding students that leaving what we know and venturing past the stage of unknown and typically short-lived discomfort are natural parts of growth and change.





NELLIE'S BIG SPLASH

(CONTINUED)

After Reading

Self-Awareness:

- What feelings did Nellie have about the journey she had to make to the ocean? Why? How did those feelings change for Nellie, and why? Do you think Nellie became less afraid of the waves and the ocean? Do you think Nellie became less afraid of the waves by the end of the book?

Self-Management:

- What agency, or control, does Nellie have over her choices? What action did Nellie decide to take for herself?

Decision-Making Skills:

- What choices does Nellie have when faced with the waves that make her nervous? What decision does Nellie make?
- Are there emotions or feelings that can impact decisions you make?

Relationship Skills:

- Who did Nellie believe would help her feel better about her fears of the ocean? Did she have their support or not? Did it work out the way she was expecting?

Social Awareness:

- How does Nellie's story help us be empathetic to the experiences of others? Have you had an experience when others were ready to do something quickly and you were more hesitant? Or were you ready to do something right away while someone you know was more nervous and not quite ready to jump into it yet? How can you be a supportive and compassionate friend to someone like Nellie?

PAIR WITH THESE OTHER TEXTS

There Might Be Lobsters, by Carolyn Crimi, illustrated by Laurel Molk

Jabari Jumps, by Gaia Cornwall

Brave Every Day, by Trudy Ludwig, illustrated by Patrice Barton

The Thing Lou Couldn't Do, by Ashley Spires

Me and My Fear, by Francesca Sanna



Activities & Extensions

Write about a time when you had to summon the courage to take a leap and try something new even though you were a little nervous. Who or what helped you be brave and have confidence?

